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MY SHARE OF THE WORLD.

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

BY

FRANCES BROWNE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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TO THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE.

My Lord,

Some time ago you did me a signal service, which, in the multiplicity of such actions, may have escaped your memory, while it remains in mine. I know not if the dedication of this work to you be a fitting acknowledgment, but the motive is the soul of the action, and mine is to testify my sincere respect for one of Nature's noblemen, and to subscribe myself,

Your Lordship's humble and obedient servant,

FRANCES BROWNE.

MY SHARE OF THE WORLD.

CHAPTER I.

The time on which strong memory keeps her hold,
Can never pass away: men count their years—
The fair of this world fade—the young grow old—
Yea, love and friendship change to strife and tears;
Wealth takes its wings and honour disappears.
But, fixed for ever, doth the past remain.
No winter weathers it—no summer cheers—
Numbered and finished, to the heart and brain,
It stands an endless loss or everlasting gain.

—*Faith's Fables.*

THE starting point of one's memory seems to me the true beginning of life. Mine is a low back parlour, about twelve feet square, with a worn and washed-out look in all its furniture, a very small fire in the grate, a shop of all-wares seen through a half-open door, and a sound of heavy rain at the window: two boys, somewhere between ten and twelve, sitting very close together at a table with slates, the one working a sum, and the other drawing Punch and Judy: there is a subjugated-looking young woman sewing hard in the corner, and seated on the floor at her feet a very little boy, whom I did not see, but he had on a newly-torn pinafore, with three oyster shells in it—his name was Frederic Favoursham—and he has lived to be the writer of the present story.

While I rejoiced over the three shells, there entered from the shop a man in a dripping great coat, followed by a pair so tall and thin, and sharp of look, that they seemed cast in one mould, and both said almost in a breath—

"Doctor, do you really think is the old man going?"

"He cannot last till morning," said the dripping man, wiping himself down with a scarlet pocket handkerchief; and there was an eager, hasty talk, which I did not understand, about wills and settlements, the Fentons and the Roses. One does not often see people in earnest. The absorbed look of every face in that room, whether speakers or listeners, may have engraved the scene on my recollection,—where it stands distinct and unattached, in the fashion of first remembered things. All around it is a blank, broken by half memories of falls, frights, and great surprises, whose causes and details are lost in the Lethe that washes our first years. By and bye, however, the look-out becomes clearer, and the ground more firm. I know the tall sharp-faced pair to be my aunt Grizzle and my uncle Gurney, the boy who worked the sums to be my cousin Ned, he who drew Punch and Judy becomes cousin Dick, and, best of all, I know the subjugated young woman to be my loving mother, whom people, when they did recognize her existence, used to call Mrs. John Favoursham.

We lived in a house which, for us, consisted of

the shop, the back parlour, the sunk flat, and the attic. There were first and second floors, but they, together with the hall door, belonged to a succession of tenants, who came and went with all their goods and chattels, leaving long vacancies, in which the empty rooms served us juveniles for a play-ground. It stood in Old Bridge Street, Liverpool, which local tradition says was the main street of the town before an American ship came up the Mersey. Its pavement was rough, its causeway was crooked, its cellars were apt to be filled at high spring tides, for our back windows opened on the river, but Old Bridge Street held fast its respectability,—nobody below small tradesmen and shopkeepers lived there in my time. They cleared it away long ago however, to make room for a dockyard, and one end of Messrs. Wright and Russell's timber store covers the site of our dwelling.

That mansion was governed by my aunt Grizzle; uncle Gurney had, of course, the legal responsibility, for they were brother and sister, and, in their own opinion, the only sterling representatives of the Favoursham family. Its dignity had never risen above shop-keeping, even in tradition, but it had occupied the same house, and kept the same shop—we were taught to say general business—ever since its grandfather came out of Cheshire, more than a century before the time of my story; and no noble lord tracing his descent in a direct line from William the Conqueror could

sit under his family tree with greater pride than did my worthy relatives. Uncle Gurney superintended the hardware, school-book, and grocery department. Aunt Grizzle conducted the toy, calico, and confectionery line; but Gurney's share in the command was merely nominal, the good man being too slow and steady to move without a leader, while she reigned supreme over all affairs mercantile and domestic, in right of ten years seniority and a better brain.

They had been left orphans when the boy was seven, and the girl seventeen, just after a heavy loss had fallen on the concern; I forget how, but it was something about a stock of Scotch barley. My aunt was accustomed to boast that she had brought up Gurney on less expense than any boy in Liverpool; and the success of that early experiment must have encouraged her to persevere, for few households were managed on more economical principles. No servant was kept, my poor mother being appointed to that office. Sugar was allowed only on Sundays. Holidays were not recognized at all, as we were Particular Baptists. Play-goings and merry-makings were things unheard of; but meat was occasionally permitted on Wednesdays and Fridays, to cultivate our contempt for Popish practices. Notwithstanding the sugar, we had sombre Sundays. For the morning, there was chapel in all weathers; in the evening, my aunt and uncle slept in their arm-chairs, we were expected to learn our catechism, and my mother

told me stories in the kitchen. Well I remember her old blue gown, her hands hard with rough work, her still girlish figure and small pale face, from which the bloom and the prettiness had gone so early; but the hard hand had, in its kindly pressure, the only genuine love I ever knew, the pale face looks yet on my sleep with a blessing, and the old gown has turned in my dreams to the radiant robe of an angel.

She was born on the banks of the Shannon; they call the place Killmore, and her name had been Rose Cary, the youngest daughter of a small farmer there. Nevertheless, I was nephew to the Favourshams. There had been a brother between Grizzle and Gurney, who was, my mother assured me, the flower of the family, and the finest man a girl could wish to see. Young as I was, it puzzled me much to make out how a brother of my staid aunt and uncle could have been, in scarlet, dancing at Mary Mullin's wake, where my mother said they took their first jig together; but when I inquired particularly into that problem, she talked something of bad company leading young men astray, and told me with tears in her eyes that my father was made for a gentleman. Farther than that intimation, and the fact that somebody, if not the world in general, had wronged and banished him, I did not learn of my father's history for many a day; but Irish speaking passengers used to come from the American ships, with private messages to my mother, and she always brightened

up for weeks after. I have never seen any of those good people since; my belief is that I should not know one of them; but I blessed them for my mother's sake. Her accent strongly resembled theirs; it was a cause of great disdain in our house; but worse remained, for my poor mother was a Catholic.

I believe strong measures had been taken for her conversion, but the desolate woman clung to the faith in which she had been brought up, kept Lent religiously, though in a quiet fashion, prayed with her rosary, and sometimes stole to mass. I have often wondered that she did not endeavour to make me a son of the "Scarlet Lady." Perhaps there was some treaty on the subject concluded with the Favourshams, and her Priest did not think it worth while to meddle with my education. I know not why my mother was so easy in this respect, for her education was limited enough to make her zealous; but I know that "Freddy dear" was the heaviest reproof that ever fell from her lips to me; that, in all my troubles, she was my help and comfort; that she did all the drudgery of the house for the bread and shelter we had in it; and besides those messages brought her from the American ships, she had no earthly enjoyment but to sit with me on her lap in spare minutes, telling stories about Ireland and the fairies, and how my father would yet come home a gentleman. Strange to say, my aunt Grizzle also entertained this idea, and I think it constituted the whole romance of her

life. What she and uncle Gurney thought in their youth it is not in my power to say; but when I knew them, they had but one aim or object, and that was to have money. For it they toiled and pinched from day to day; for it they planned and cared when we were all asleep, and had done so, I know not how many years; but bad debts, runaway tenants, and losing speculations of all kinds, had left them that broken and meagre measure of success which wears out the strength and tries the hope of all but the true mammon-worshipper. They had something in some bank or other; that was all anybody was permitted to know. The shop had a considerable run of poor customers, though its reputation did not stand high for either cheapness or quality of goods; neighbours came to the old place, and generally found the sort of thing they wanted in its miscellaneous stock.

My aunt was partial to enumerating the orphans she and Gurney had to keep; and this, together with what I like to call a naturally historical turn of mind, fixed my attention on the parentage of my cousins, Ned and Dick. They were so much older than I, and kept me in such profound subjection, that, in play or mischief, I only ventured to follow humbly in their wake. They had better clothes too, and were strictly kept at school; my aunt took charge of that matter, and she had some trouble, particularly with Dick. He was good-natured, but said to be idle and scheming. The hearing of his tasks, which my aunt sometimes

attempted, was a terrible business. Ned's teachers praised him, I was told, for a good scholar and a steady boy; but at home he was always grumbling, and never quite well, except when we had a good dinner. I had found out, partly from my mother, and partly by that instinctive perception which children have, that my cousins' birth was a forbidden subject, and therefore kept it for private meditation; but once, as I played with pebbles at the shop door in the summer twilight, there walked in a tall grey-haired man, with gleaming shoe buckles and heavy gold seals to his watch. Before him my aunt and uncle humbled themselves as I had never seen them do to any customer, though he bought nothing, but went into the back parlour. Ned and Dick were immediately called from the first floor, which chanced to be then tenantless. I was sent to my mother in the kitchen, and when he went away the boys had got new Bibles. They called the gentleman Mr. Rollinson. If that were not his first visit, it is the first I remember; but afterwards he came regularly every fortnight, and generally on Saturday evening. The back parlour was always dusted against his coming. My uncle brushed his coat, my aunt put her best cap on, Ned and Dick sat with very demure faces and all their school books, and at length even I was invested with a clean pinafore and allowed to witness the grand ceremonial.

It consisted of a thorough examination into my cousins' learning, and an occasional distribution of

shillings to them alone; an exhortation to every body on the score of religion, which the gentleman delivered with his eyes shut; and a confidential talk with my aunt and uncle, which none of the juniors were permitted to hear. I felt sure that gentleman must be rich, from the deference paid him by aunt Grizzle and uncle Gurney. Whosoever had money was their sage, their saint, and their prophet. I am not certain that they did not think banking somehow went on in Heaven. But I know that Mr. Rollinson's admonitory sayings were quoted as texts of discipline; that the Sunday was always more severe after his visit; and that, in spite of the shillings, Ned and Dick regarded it as a fortnightly judgment. To my childish mind there was something awfully grand about the old gentleman. He might have been sixty; his frame was large and erect beyond the common; he walked with a heavy step and a sort of swing; his hair was iron-gray, and his beard would have been, but, like the sober citizens of those times, he left scarce a vestige of whisker on a broad bronze face, with heavy eyebrows, which, when the keen deep-set eyes were closed, had an iron massiveness, I thought, like inexorable destiny. This, together with the seals and shoe-buckles, made his exhortations, of which I did not understand a word, terribly impressive to me. I behaved myself with astonishing propriety in his presence. I learned small hymns and verses expressly to ward off the chance of his anger, in my

simplicity confounding it with the wrath to come, of which he was in the habit of speaking. To my great satisfaction, Mr. Rollinson deigned me very little notice, confining his attention chiefly to my cousins. They said he was their guardian; but it crossed me at times, like a marvellous suspicion, that he might be the old man "who could not last till morning," and I could never make it clear to my own mind that he had not gone and come back again. My mother had no information on that point; indeed, I think she never fully understood the drift of my inquiries, and I pondered over the matter as solitary children do.

Mine was indeed a solitary childhood. I had no playmates, no companions; there were children in Old Bridge Street—what street is without them—but my aunt was on bad terms with most of their mothers, and the rest were too low company for a Favoursham. Moreover, I was the charity child of the establishment, for whom there was little encouragement even to exist, and whom everybody found in the way. Childhood, however, can find its own entertainment. There was Punch and Judy to be seen, there were gutters when one could steal out to them, there were stones and oyster shells to be had within doors; and above all these amenities, there lay a light on my first years which after fortunes could not bring, for I loved my mother, and my mother loved me, as if there were none but ourselves in the wide world. I cannot say how early I began to help her and make my-

self generally useful, but I remember how she taught me to read in an old book of fairy tales brought with her from Ireland, and treasured up with a rosary and a pink ribbon my father had bought her at a fair. She also taught me to write after a fashion, and on a very rough slate; that was all the schooling I ever had: time and inclination did all the rest; and, as I grew older, there was need to practise with the slate and the fairy tales by way of amusement.

Life in our house was a tough, unameliorated business; there was no leisure allowed. Besides Mr. Rollinson, we had no visitors, except the Particular Baptist minister, a stout gentleman in black, who came once every winter to warn us against the vanities of the world; and the Whittles, a crusty childless pair. As far as I recollect, their conversation regarded people who were going to ruin, and impressed me with the conviction that mankind in general must be on that downward road; but they sat in our chapel, kept the chandler's shop over the way, and were believed to have saved something. Many an hour they and my gentle relatives discussed what ought to be done with me as regarded trade or calling. All the four had different opinions, to which they stood firm. My own speculations for the future—how vague and clear of difficulty those early visions are—varied between going to sea like Robinson Crusoe, and setting out for London like Whittington. My poor mother was anxious that I should be sent to

school, but nobody consulted her; and by and by there was greater news in the back parlour, for Ned and Dick went to their apprenticeship.

The affair was settled one Saturday evening. After Mr. Rollinson had examined, bestowed shillings, exhorted and held his usual conference with my aunt and uncle, the boys were called in, and I know not what was said to them, but next Monday they were taken from school and bound apprentices to Mr. Wiggens, the Evangelical bookseller in Lime Street, who did business with all the Missions, Sunday Schools, and Tract Societies in England, and was expected to set up his carriage. Even Ned went in great spirits; and Dick told me that, if they were good boys—as, for his part, he intended to be—their guardian would set them up, and they should have old Wiggens' shop when he retired from business. The boys lived in their master's house, where they were to have pious training, and came to see us every second Saturday. Mr. Rollinson also continued to come, and things went on as before, only he now examined them in the bookselling business instead of their school lessons. I had got used to his comings, and over my early terrors by that time. Moreover, my aunt found out that I could be made useful in the shop, and being of an active turn, I learned to weigh and tie up for all but particular customers.

So time wore on till I turned out of the narrow track of childhood, and grew, my mother said, "a clever, handsome boy, with the fair face and curly

brown hair of his father." How strange it is to recall our former selves, when there is nothing in all the world so changed. How strange to note the stages of life; they move by moments, but their passing away comes upon us like a sudden revelation; we rise some morning and find ourselves no longer boys but men; we go to dress some evening and discover that we are old and grey. It was with some such feeling that I was struck, perhaps through the apparent diminution of my nether garments, with the fact that my fifteenth year was drawing to a close. With that reflection came the cares which so early beset the unprovided for portion of mankind. I had yet earned nothing. My poor mother's position gave the thought a double weight. The message-bringing passengers had long ceased to call, but a charwoman, who was a sort of humble acquaintance, spoke with a twang of the Shannon, and had a son in America, came one day with a letter, which my mother and she read confidentially, first between themselves, and then in close council with my aunt and uncle. The news was kept a solemn secret from me. My aunt sent me on an errand expressly to be out of the way; but she and uncle Gurney were in a state of permanent ill-humour for some time after, and I guessed it was something about my father. That was the only topic on which my mother had been reserved with me. I had learned to respect her silence, though often curious regarding my wandering parent, for whom, in truth, I had no other

care; now she was still more silent, but kind as usual, and went about work as if nothing troubled her, yet gradually I noticed that a hopeless heart-broken look settled on her face, and the grey began to thicken in her hair.

My mother was growing old in toil and poverty. There seemed no prospect of the return she had so long expected. Indeed, my father's coming home a gentleman had ceased to be talked of even by aunt Grizzle. It was time I should try to earn something. The thought pressed on me day and night. I had been a well-disciplined boy; everybody except my mother snubbed me from my earliest remembrance; and it was long before I could summon courage enough to publish my manifesto, which I must say was done in my best manner one winter evening when the shop was shut, and we were all in the back parlour, my mother mending my old jacket at the farthing candle, aunt Grizzle and uncle Gurney sitting over the small fire, and the rain—it always sounded wonderfully in that room—pattering against the window. I think my mother was pleased with "Freddy's spirit." Little encouragement was afforded, however, by my aunt and uncle; they found me serviceable in the shop, they did not intend to pay anything like wages, and they considered themselves entitled not only to the services of my future life, but also to my eternal gratitude for what they called bringing me up. Uncle Gurney plainly intimated his views on the subject;

aunt Grizzle gave me a sound scolding, and a great deal of good advice, the staple of which was, to do as I was bidden, and trust in Providence; and I went to bed very much confused and uncertain whether or not I had committed an extraordinary sin.

CHAPTER II.

His was a life of failures—he had gained
Nothing for which men struggle—friends or fame—
Fortune or love or place among his peers.
All had been losses which the world could see
And reckon as deservings: yet methinks
The man was not more luckless in his day
Than some that count for winners and wise men.
—*Count Ernest's Play.*

My boyhood was in those changing years which succeeded the general peace. Bad old times I suppose they ought to be called now, though most of the established generation remember them, and the seeds of the present were in them. Gas was new. Steam was only becoming respectable. We had no railways, no electric telegraph, no penny postage, and no weeklies but the newspapers; yet Scott, Byron, and Moore were coming out with the publishing seasons; the Lake School was still a living institution; the *Edinburgh* and *Quarterly Reviewers* were mighty men of letters; and the monthly magazines were looked for as if people's good luck had been somehow stitched up with them. Politicians mutually scolded and abused each other's families in print. Temperance Societies had not yet come into consideration. Parliamentary elections lasted for weeks, and did as much damage as a fire in the neighbourhood. There was a continual din

about Whigs and Tories. Radical was a word of fear, not unlike the present infidel: whosoever talked of reforming anything stood in danger of that distinction. A permanent dread of the Catholics lay on most people's minds; and a strong odour of disabilities and barn-preaching times still hung about the Dissenters. Nevertheless dissent was looking up. The day of cotton had dawned, the kingdom of factories was founded; a flood of trade and speculation, undreamed of till then, was filling the northern towns, and enriching the Nonconformists, who had there abounded from the days of Bunyan and Baxter. Lancashire in particular was rising on the ruins of the linen trade. The tall chimneys and power-looms of Manchester were multiplying every day; so were the ships and warehouses of Liverpool; but the foundation of their prosperity was of older standing. The capital which made merchants and millowners, had been realized by people's fathers and grandfathers in a business of which their descendants did not boast. During the long war with France, a considerable amount of privateering was done at the port of Liverpool; but far more money had been made by fitting out vessels for the slave trade, in which no town was said to have gone deeper or shown more commercial enterprise. Long after the traffic became illegal, firms got rich, nobody knew how; men came home with great fortunes who had gone out second mates; and slavers were taken in the Middle Passage, with Spanish colors

and crews, that swore in English. The old and graceless generation, to whom these tales related, were almost safe in their graves. Their sons reigned in their stead, building docks and factories with their gatherings; and, as morality and religion became popular towards the beginning of George the Fourth's reign, there was a great deal of seriousness and subscribing to Tract Societies among them. I am not sure that Evangelicalism did not begin with the cotton trade; but I know that dissent grew rich and respectable: handsome chapels, with Gothic ornaments and moving preachers in them, superseded the unadorned and dingy edifices which had done duty from before the Lime Street Lectures, except where the congregation was decidedly poor.

The flock to which our household belonged came especially under that description. I cannot say how matters go now, but in my youth the Particular Baptists of Liverpool did not seem to have got their full share of its profits: they were few in number and small in capital: our congregation suitably represented those peculiarities, and worshipped in a building of the ancient order, which stood in a lane leading from Old Bridge Street to the Fish Market. The fact was not acknowledged, but I knew it had once been a brewhouse. The roof was low, the pews were high, the windows were narrow, and there was about the whole an air of penitential mouldiness which, doubtless aided by the dreary sermons of

our minister, the Rev. Blackmoor Biggs, had a most chilling effect on the Sabbaths of my childhood.

The lane is gone, the congregation exists no more; but I dream of the old meeting-house, as we called it, yet at nights when the fog lies heavy on London. There are the grey heads scattered among the pews, the deacon who took notes, the clerk who was bent with rheumatism, and the two old women in hoods who sat on the steps of the pulpit. There, too, are the young faces with their Sunday sedateness on; the dresses long out of mind and fashion; the heavy breathing of sound sleepers, and the steady tones of the Rev. Blackmoor Biggs. I was sitting under his refreshing ministrations one Sunday about three weeks after the bold but unsuccessful enterprise narrated in my first chapter. There was nobody in our narrow pew but aunt Grizzle in her yellow silk scarf, black hat and long mittens, looking as if she was counting something —good woman, that was always her sermon aspect; uncle Gurney fast asleep in his accustomed corner; and myself, as usual, seated hard by the pew door, which never closed, because its hinges were broken. My cousins sat in Mr. Wiggen's pew: by the way, it was the only cushioned one in our meeting-house. Mr. Rollinson had been on circuit the day before, and given them new hymn books, which I distantly admired, for they had gilt edges, when a stranger entered, and, seeing there was room, seated himself without ceremony be-

tween my aunt and me. He was a large, handsome man, well but carelessly dressed, and somewhere in middle life. His hair was raven black, he had fine eyes, a clear brown complexion, and a sort of general flush over his intelligent and good-humoured face. It was not often that strangers came into our meeting-house, still more rarely did they remain to hear out the sermon; but this man did seemingly with profound attention, yet, by and by, I noticed that he looked a great deal, though in an underhand way, at Mr. Wiggens' pew, and his great attraction there was my cousins. What he saw wonderful about Ned and Dick puzzled me, till I half believed it was their hymn books; but when meeting was over, the gentleman gave me a wink, as much as to say we will stand by each other, and I saw him follow us at some distance, till we reached our own door. I felt persuaded he had some business with me, but what it was surpassed my boyish wisdom. However, next day was that appointed by my uncle and aunt for taking tea with the Whittles. The ceremony had been instituted since I grew old enough to be left in charge. It took place once every quarter at their respective houses, commencing at four p.m. and terminating precisely at seven. I was left with the usual injunctions to be careful of paper and string, and let nobody go without buying. Moreover, I had discovered a volume of Robin Hood's ballads among my uncle's most ancient stationery, with which, as it was a for-

bidden study, I resolved to improve the time. It was a foggy, cold evening, no customers came, and my mother had a washing in hand below. I had shut the door and sat myself comfortably down to Will Scarlet and Little John, when, without a knock, the door was pushed open, and in stepped the gentleman, looking just the same as he did in our pew. He asked me first for tobacco pipes; then what book I was reading; and, thirdly, where was my father. I thought him a strange gentleman, but there was something so peculiar, so good-natured, and withal so gay and easy in his manner, that I was won at once, and gave him my entire confidence. All my mother had ever told me from the first jig to the home coming, of which she talked no more; all about my aunt and uncle, Ned and Dick, Mr. Rollinson, and my own anxiety to earn something, I detailed, with many additional particulars regarding the Whittles, Old Bridge Street, and our meeting-house. The gentleman listened with the most friendly interest, asked me a great many questions, chiefly concerning Mr. Rollinson and my cousins; advised me to be a good boy, and tipped me with a crown piece. I will not attempt to describe my own delight and amazement; probably the gentleman saw it in my face, for he said—

"Keep sober, my boy; did you never see five shillings before? perhaps, if you behave well, I'll get you a place." And he added something in an under tone, as if talking to himself about John

Favoursham, as he passed out and closed the door, before I could get my thanks up.

Half wild with joy, I ran to my mother, told her what the gentleman had said, showed her the crown, and danced about the kitchen as if my fortune had been made for ever. My mother said it was the doing of Providence, and she did not understand it; no doubt my father had good friends, who would not forget his son, though *he* had forgotten both her and me; and the poor woman caught me in her arms and wept sore. I could stand anything but my mother's tears. I begged her to tell me what she meant, and what was the matter, but she said "Nothing, dear," and wiped her eyes hastily, for we heard my aunt and uncle coming in.

They had found the shop door unbolted and me off guard. I should have had a considerable scolding, but the news proved a mighty breakwater, and no time was lost in telling it. They did not get a full account: my knowledge of the home government made me aware that it would not do to tell how closely the gentleman had questioned me about my cousins, and how much I had revealed, but I enlarged on his promise to get me a place, and his farewell mutterings about John Favoursham.

"The gentleman who sat in our pew on Sunday," said my aunt in a sort of running comment; "strange that I did not know him; but it must be Harry Fenton, nobody else would give you a

crown, I'm sure." And she wound off a quantity of good advice on the duty of thankfulness for having a respectable shop to keep, "where gentlemen could take notice of me on account of my family;" closing with a demand that the crown should immediately be delivered into her guardianship.

Against that infringement of my liberties I stood out with a resolution worthy of the confederate barons; nobody should get the crown but my mother, and she ventured to think Freddy should keep it for a pocket piece. Uncle Gurney, I thank him for it yet, took part with us, saying—"It was the boy's own;" and I retired that night in possession of my treasure. It was to me an earnest that the gentleman would return with the promised place.

I know not how long the hope would have lasted, but while the crown was yet new, and I was occupied in copying from it the royal countenance of George the Third, with a piece of chalk on the side of the counter, one afternoon in the same week, when my aunt and uncle were at tea, and no customers coming, my trusted patron walked in so quietly that I did not see him till his hand was on my shoulder, and he said—

"What's this?—let me see if you will ever be an artist."

He had no time to give an unbiased opinion of my performance; aunt Grizzle had seen something through the small glass pane in the parlour door, and she was with us in a moment.

"Miss Favoursham," said the gentleman, extending both hands, and looking perfectly delighted; "don't you remember Harry Fenton, who used to annoy your quiet house so often long ago? Great changes in the world since then, Miss Favoursham. We have all had our own troubles."

"We all have in this wicked world," said my aunt, shaking hands. "But dear me, Mr. Fenton, you sat in our pew last Sunday, and I did not know you."

"Of course you did not. I am growing such an old fellow; came in a quiet way to see old, I mean early, friends; and between ourselves, Miss Favoursham, you and your brother made me ashamed of myself, looking so young as you do. I have been all over the continent since you saw me, studying the old masters, and such a pair I did not see in either France or Italy."

"Oh, Mr. Fenton," said aunt Grizzle, her thin lips curving into a smile.

"Upon my word it's true," continued the gentleman; "you must give me a sitting some day. I have just settled in Manchester, got a splendid business there, worth a thousand a year on the lowest computation, and your nephew here looks a smart boy."

"Smart enough, Mr. Fenton," interrupted my aunt, "if he gets grace to go steady and careful; Gurney and I have had a heavy charge."

"Of course you had, Miss Favoursham," my

friend rejoined. "And I have been thinking there is a boy wanted to grind colors and look after the sitters in my painting room: nothing menial, you know; but he might learn a deal, and come to be a great artist himself."

"Will you walk into the parlour, Mr. Fenton?" said my aunt with uncommon dignity.

Mr. Fenton walked in, and what he said is unknown to me. Let me acknowledge that the glass pane alone prevented my approach to the key hole; but I could catch being out of old Rollinson's way, and not injuring the family interest, through the shrill tones of my aunt and the low creak of uncle Gurney. After about an hour's conference, I was called in and asked if I should like to go with Mr. Fenton to Manchester. My answer was ready: I would, but must ask my mother.

"That's a good boy," said Mr. Fenton. "I was just wishing to be introduced to Mrs. Favoursham."

He was introduced, and my heart venerated the man for the respect he showed her, old gown and all. My mother was partly prepared for the event, and would consent to anything that seemed for Freddy's good. Besides, there was a fine story now afloat—who originated it I cannot say, but my aunt had the fullest version—that Mr. Fenton had been struck with my drawing on the counter, and thought my talents should be cultivated in his painting room.

That tale was imparted to the Whittles, to the Rev. Blackmoor Biggs, and to several of our most intimate customers. I got the presentation of the Youth's Instructor, two Catechisms, and a hymn book on its account, and might have become a boy of distinction in Old Bridge Street; but on the following Saturday, when my mother had mended and packed up all my things in a little rough deal box, to which her own hands had given a smart covering of blue paper, my master came according to appointment, and I was formally committed to his charge, to be a good boy, and get a guinea a quarter, with large but very indefinite promises of future advancement. Ned and Dick came to bid me good-bye; my aunt gave me an exhortation to be steady and careful; my uncle hoped I should not come to mischief; my mother did not cry at parting, but her eyes were red when she kissed me and said—

"Freddy dear, be a good boy, and try to come to me in Heaven."

I have forgotten sound advices and eloquent sermons, a legion of moral maxims, a host of rules for conduct, and an army of good resolutions, but my mother's farewell words have kept root in my memory in spite of floods of folly and winds of doctrine, the only remnant of faith, or hope, or hold on the hereafter that life has left with me.

It was a wonder to myself long after why I grieved so little at parting with my mother; but going to Manchester seemed such a glorious thing,

and Mr. Fenton promised to let me come and see her at the end of the first quarter, so I followed him down the street, carrying my blue covered box like a man who had got a position. There came a softening over my heart when we reached the Crown and Sceptre, from which the Matchless started every afternoon. The inn is gone now, as well as the stage coach; but there was a milliner's shop opposite in those days, and a brilliant thought struck me—I did not tell Mr. Fenton—but while the coach was getting ready in I darted and spent the crown on a cap for my mother. It was some sort of muslin trimmed with pink ribbons, the milliner said a most fashionable article; and I sent it home in a bandbox, on which I wrote my mother's name. Aunt Grizzle wore that cap at Lucy Rose's wedding; but that was all to come, and I took my outside place with my new master and was whirled away it seemed into the great world.

Everybody remembers the first of his travels, however performed—by train, stage, wagon, or that most lively of conveyances, the canal boat; so I pass over the wonder, the novelty, and the glory which came down on my days of emancipation from the Favourshams. It was the Columbus time of my life, an age of great discovery. I remember the inns at which we changed horses, the ceaseless passing of vehicles along that busy road, and late at night the tall chimneys and flaring lights of Manchester. Once more I followed Mr. Fenton

with my box: it was a long way from the coach office to his residence; I thought the streets and lanes would never be done, but at last we came to a street which looked as if it had run out to the country in its building days and stayed there. There was half a row of tall houses on one side, on the other a few cottages with fields between, and a distant prospect of grounds and mansions beyond the line of lamps. At one of the tall houses my master stopped and took out a latch key. A plate on the door set forth that it was Mrs. Sutherland's genteel boarding-house, but a terrible sound of scolding in broad Scotch came up from the sunk flat as we entered. There was no light in the passage; however, Mr. Fenton seemed quite at home, he shut the door, took the box from me, and led me up to the first floor in a style which proved his determination to keep quiet. Arrived there his practised hand found a light, and I saw a large room well furnished, and all over littered with old clothes, old newspapers, empty cigar cases, spilled color boxes, and rolls of canvas. There was also a palette and an easel, innumerable spots of paint on the carpet, a large screen which made a sort of closet of a corner filled with book shelves, while the mantel-piece, besides two beautiful statuettes of Diana and Apollo, was garnished with weapons then as unfamiliar to me, foils and boxing gloves. My master employed himself in kindling up a half dead fire with the old newspapers scattered about. I assisted; and while we were thus en-

gaged there was a cessation of the noise below, a heavy step came up the stairs, and a large woman, in a dirty silk gown, and an equally soiled cap, full of ribbons and flowers, flounced into the room. Her age was somewhere on the far side of forty; her hair was red, her face was red, and her dirty silk gown was red too. She had ear-rings of uncommon size and brilliancy. An odour of gin pervaded the whole apartment on her entrance; but there was something about the square face which reminded me of my cousins.

"You're come back," she said, addressing my master. "Time for you, I'm sure. There's the tobacconist, the doctor, and the man at the corner, at me night and day wi' your bills; and that hussy below drinkin' the cordial and eatin' the pigeon pie, nae wonder I'm a ruined woman." And plunging down on a chair, she began to sob and cry in a most formidable fashion.

"My dear Mrs. Sutherland," said my master, going close up to her, "don't disturb yourself; I'll settle with everybody, and talk to Mary Ann by and by; do let us have some supper."

"Supper," screamed Mrs. Sutherland, who, I must premise, discoursed in a dialect of which, having never acquired the northern Doric, I must write but a wretched imitation. "Supper indeed; wha's that you're brought."

"It is the son of my old friend, John Favoursham," said Fenton meekly. "I wanted a boy to grind colors and ——"

"John Favoursham's brat brought hame to me wi'out me leave, there's imperance; de'el a bit eather of you'll chow in my hoose." And she bounced out.

"Mrs. Sutherland, Janet, I say," cried Mr. Fenton, rushing after her down stairs; but he took the precaution to close the door on me, and I stood by the fire in some astonishment at my first scene in his painting room. How the battle went below I could not ascertain for some time. There were shouts about Papishes and beggars which I felt as referring somehow to my mother and myself, and grew very indignant accordingly; but by degrees the noise subsided, till I could hear only Fenton's voice, and at length he came up with the look of a man who had conquered difficulties.

After carefully shutting the door, wiping his face with his handkerchief, and seating himself so solemnly that I knew something was coming, he said, "My dear boy, Frederic I think is your name, you must not be surprised at Mrs. Sutherland; she has odd ways, a little nervous or so, but she is a very worthy person, and will be quite a mother to you. I live here, you understand, for country air; my painting room is in King Street, an extremely fashionable quarter; but as many gentry call on me there, and one cannot be always in state, I prefer this nice convenient place; and just to avoid being stared at, as artists of note will, you know, I pass for a German here, and they call me Mr. Gerber. You are a smart boy, Frederic, and

will know who people want, but mind you never call me Fenton here, nor Gerber in King Street. If the like ever slip out with you, just say it was your last master's name, and always runs in your mind."

In the dull penurious house in Old Bridge Street I had been taught to eschew and contemn falsehood. My mother used to say that decent people's children should have a spirit above fibs; and my aunt and uncle, with all their love of money, had strictly honest and truth-telling ways. Mr. Fenton's discourse struck me with amazement, and I suspect my mouth and eyes opened proportionably wide, for he burst out laughing; but the next moment I saw the flush of shame pass over his face as he rose, saying, "These things are not quite right, my boy, but they must be done in this world," and walked away to the opposite corner. I could say nothing, and there was no time. Mary Ann, the maid of all work, who was a correct copy of her mistress, except that she looked twenty years younger, wore a clean cap, and did not speak Scotch, now appeared with the remnant of a large pie, possibly that whereon she had trespassed, a pot of ale, and a bottle of something, which she deposited on the table, with the intimation "that missus had taken a narvous turn and gone to bed."

"I hope she will be better in the morning," said Mr. Fenton, cutting out the pie; "and, Mary Ann, bring a blanket and things for Frederic, he will sleep here on the sofa."

"Can't, sir," said Mary Ann, "missus has locked up everything, and she would be 'orrid if I went for the keys."

Mr. Fenton muttered something very like a curse to himself, and then said, in a clearer tone, "Never mind, Frederic, my great coat and cloak will cover you for this night, and I'll find you a berth to-morrow."

I said I could sleep very well anywhere, and most people can at fifteen; so, when we had finished supper, he brought me the coat and cloak, poked up the fire, bade me a kind good night, and retired to his own bed in the adjoining room, taking with him the bottle, which he said was always kept in a cupboard there. I lay down with the red fire-light gleaming over that large littered room and a heavy chill of disappointment on my mind. Everything about my new place was queer and unlike what I and my friends expected; its glory had departed already, and I wished myself miles away from Mrs. Sutherland and her genteel boarding-house. However, there was no alternative but Old Bridge Street, and I had been long enough there; besides, was not I in the way of earning something for my mother? And sleep found me resting on that consolation.

When my eyes opened next morning Mary Ann was finishing the pie we had left. She commanded me to get up till the room was put straight; that operation, let me observe, consisted of bundling the litter away behind the screen, with a limited

exertion of the broom and duster. I lent a helping hand, and achieved the good graces of Mary Ann. She condescended to tell me "that Mr. Fenton was one of the kindest gentlemen that ever lived, and not at all stingy, nor given to look after trifles; that he had lodged there off and on for three years; and Mrs. Sutherland was a good sort of a woman, but it would be best for a boy to keep out of her way when the narvous turns came on, for she was oncommon."

The lady thus described was seated in the breakfast parlour, to which the voice of Mr. Fenton summoned me about two hours after, when I had looked out of the windows, taken the bearings of the street, and peeped at the books behind the screen. She looked much more composed than on the preceding night, and very like Ned when he was in an ill humour; but there had been a discussion relative to my place in the household, for, when at the door, I heard Mr. Fenton say, "He is John Favoursham's son, and I will not see him treated like a servant, Mrs. Sutherland."

"Good morning, Frederic," he continued, as I entered, "come here and sit by me, that is your place, and I hope you will be quite at home here; Mrs. Sutherland will find a nice room for you, and you and I must set to work."

So he talked on about a picture he had to rub in, a little man who had promised him a sitting, and what a color-grinder he would make of me; while I gathered composure, and Mrs. Sutherland

presided with a very solemn but subdued countenance.

It was a strange place by which, as old novels say, I made my entrance into the world. They called the street Leopold Terrace; it had been laid out about the time of Princess Charlotte's marriage, and was intended for Manchester fashion, but gentility took a turn in the opposite direction: a forest of factory chimneys grew between it and the squares; a chancery suit arose between its proprietors, and the terrace became, what I believe it still remains, a queer and quiet corner of the cotton capital, the habitation of odd and out-of-the-way people. There was a physician, who took in boarders requiring special attention; a widow, who instructed young ladies of weak mind; and a house with considerable palings, which I learned was a small establishment of the Sisters of Mercy. Lawyers, captains, and clergymen lived there, but they all looked reduced and retired. The nearest shop was that of a tobacconist in the next street; and there was a quiet old-fashioned public-house, which had once been a country inn, at the corner. As for my own quarters in the genteel boarding-house there was nothing like regularity in it. Our dinners came off at hours varying from one to six, our breakfasts from eight to twelve. Mrs. Sutherland's "narvous turns" occurred frequently. Her battles with Mary Ann were many and mighty. I cannot say to which side the victory inclined; but even my master avoided his landlady in the

height of her turns, though in the main he had the command, and retained it probably by rare exertion. His policy was in general to preserve a strict neutrality, and give the dirty silk gown room; but in times of extraordinary trial his courage rose to the occasion, and Mrs. Sutherland seemed aware that there was a length she could go, but no farther. There was certainly no companionship between them. Fenton, with all his failings, was gay, cultivated, and had the tastes of a true artist. Mrs. Sutherland was one of the least interesting of womankind—dull, unpolished in mind and manners, and but a rough housekeeper when not in her turns, or making war on Mary Ann. They were at times singularly confidential, however; and when words were high it came out more than once that Mrs. Sutherland was in the enjoyment of an income and lent money. Beyond this I know nothing, nor ever cared to inquire; but the "narvous turns" had a traceable connection with the old-fashioned house at the corner, for the maid was often sent in that direction, and the mistress occasionally went after dusk.

Mr. Fenton and I were the only boarders in the house. Others came at intervals, but they did not stay long, nor ever returned, to my knowledge. I had a berth, as my master promised; it was a back room on the third floor, the rest of which was devoted to lumber, with a window looking over lanes and fields far into the country. I could see the smoke of Manchester floating out in heavy

masses when the wind blew that way, long strips of country roads, wind-mills, solitary farm-houses, and one great mansion with a park about it which seemed half way to Liverpool. There were smaller seats and villas to be seen from our terrace, but that great house riveted my attention. I wondered what rich man owned it; and once, when we were alone together, ventured to ask Mr. Fenton.

"That house!" said he; "it belongs to one of the old Rollinsons, the gentleman who used to look after your cousins Ned and Dick; but Frederic," he added in a lower tone, "you must not talk of him before Mrs. Sutherland."

I took his advice, though I could not make out its meaning. From the first that good lady had shown a strong inclination to snub me; but partly through the dread of her, and partly through my master's support, I had been enabled to act on the no-notice principle with such good effect that in time she not only allowed me to live unmolested, but showed me some civility, and took private opportunities of asking odd and numberless questions about my uncle, my aunt, and my cousins in Liverpool. I perceived, however, that Mr. Fenton did not care for leaving me much in her company. His was a great deal pleasanter; and, perhaps, for want of a better, he made me a sort of juvenile associate. We were always together in the littered chamber, called his painting room. I learned to grind colors, to mix them with oil,

and in time to use the brush. Here let me remark, by way of sparing my reader unfounded expectations, that notwithstanding the pleasant tale told in Old Bridge Street, nature did not endow me with one scrap of artistic talent, and the only specimens of painting I ever attempted were unredeemable daubs.

Had it been in me, I might have learned from my master, for he knew it. I have seen his pictures since; they are only portraits, but Sir Joshua did not do better than some of them. Nevertheless, I saw no signs of the business worth one thousand a year on the lowest computation; nor did we ever adjourn to the fashionable painting room, where all the gentry came to see him. There was always a picture in hand, and two or three sitters dropped in from the neighbourhood. I remember a young lady in white from the widow's establishment who sat half an hour and then started up, telling my master and me we were conspiring against her; and a tall man who lodged next door, and was called the squire, with whom Mr. Fenton took a round of boxing every day for a fortnight, and his portrait was not finished in my time. Mr. Fenton, indeed, did not overwork himself. Sometimes he rose early, sometimes he rose late, but his forenoons were passed in reading the newspapers, smoking his long pipe, and lounging in Mrs. Sutherland's parlour, where odd-looking men from the neighbourhood came and lounged with him. In the afternoon he generally painted a little, talking

to me all the while, when he had no sitters. If the evening was fine he took a ramble through the town or the fields, always taking me with him; if it was wet, no uncommon case in Manchester, he taught me or read some of his books. Often, when the beer was brought in, he went out alone, and I have heard him come in singing at the break of day. Young eyes are keener than their seniors imagine. I soon discovered that Mary Ann was now and then sent to the corner house on his account; and when painting, reading, or talking, he was in the habit of retiring for some minutes to his own room, from which he would emerge with color and spirits surprisingly heightened. I could not guess the cause in those days of simplicity, but now I understand that my poor master had recourse to drams of every variety, from gin to laudanum.

These were Harry Fenton's doings towards himself; but his character had a side in which I was more directly concerned, for he was kind, good-natured, and considerate in no common degree. Safer guardianship for a boy of fifteen might, doubtless, have been found; but from the day I first came under his government, he cared for my wants, thought of my comforts, and even looked after my morals, for I am persuaded that the private consolations referred to were kept out of my sight rather to spare the boy an evil example than to maintain his own reputation.

When the odd-looking men began to say odd

things, he always found something for me to do out of the parlour. Except on errands, he never allowed me to go out alone, for fear of bad company in the factory town. But he showed me the most of it in our evening rambles, though there were streets he would not enter till after dark; often bought me trifles at the shops and stalls; and always brought me home safe before setting out on his own peculiar excursions. Mr. Fenton also took my education in hand. His own was good; he had studied at Eton and Cambridge, taken honors, and was an M.A. More than that, he loved learning, and cultivated it in spite of irregular habits and low associations. His library behind the screen contained some of the best and rarest books, both old and new: it was a place of frequent resort and great rejoicing to me, for I had time on my hands and was a reading boy. My master not only allowed me the run of his books, but took a sort of amusement in giving me sound though desultory lessons on all the branches with which he was acquainted. Under his administration I picked up a tolerable stock of knowledge, acquired in anything but routine fashion. To-day I had a sketch of Latin, to-morrow a turn at Euclid, arithmetic was followed by drawing, and the French Grammar made way for the noble science of self-defence. Of the latter, Mr. Fenton was a devoted admirer, and no mean professor either. It was then I believe rather in the decline at exclusive clubs, but still extensively patronised in the sporting world;

and he esteemed it not only a gentlemanly but a national accomplishment, being a Tory of the war water in spite of continental travelling and otherwise liberal views; it was his patriotic boast that no Frenchman could learn to box, and that the proper use of the fist was understood only in England. How I succeeded in this department of the fine arts it is not for me to say. My master's opinion was that I would hit with precision after some year's training; but any other lesson was more to my taste, and I studied the noble science to please him by way of quit rent for all his kindness.

The place was not dull when its strangeness wore off; but kind as Fenton was, I missed my mother sorely, and used to cry for her in my own room before going to sleep, though nobody knew that piece of babyism. The socks she darned, and the gloves she knitted, came to "Freddy" by Brown, the old honest carrier, who had been on the road for fifty years and never was known to forget anything. With them came kindly letters—for postage was a dear business then—in her own large copyhand and bad spelling. I have burned many an elegant epistle, but keep *them* all yet. They were addressed, as Mr. Fenton had directed, to the unvisited chambers in King Street, and brought by a poor, but military-looking man, with a wooden leg, who seemed to have the charge of all his correspondence, and generally called him your honor and sometimes colonel. My responses were returned

by the same agency, with "haste" written on them. I told my mother a good deal about my place, but not the whole truth.

"You know, my boy," said Fenton, when I was writing my first letter, "I am only waiting to get little matters arranged with my banker, and open the painting room in style: your good mother would not understand that, so never mind saying where we live, and particularly, Frederic, not a word of Mrs. Sutherland."

That did not look quite sterling; but Fenton was my master, and the letters must pass through his hands; besides, I should see my mother at the end of the quarter, and it was drawing near.

CHAPTER III.

If thou canst only learn all story teaches,
Whether it speak of palaces or huts,
I have heard village gossips o'er their ale
Set forth in wordy records of old neighbours
Who lived and died beneath their hamlet trees,
The strength of time, the fickleness of fortune,
The changeful turns of human love and glory,
As clearly as they stand on Livy's page.
—*Count Ernest's Play.*

I AM not going to moralize on the fatality of having our wishes granted, since, in spite of all that sage and poet have said on the subject, most men would be found willing to run that risk, and myself among the number; but it was exemplified in a small way by an adventure which about this time befell my master.

Ever since his coming home, he had remarked on, or rather deplored, the non-appearance of a little man from Bristol, with whom he had fraternized in a Liverpool hotel, where they drank a bottle of old port together, and the little man promised him a sitting. Besides the above, Mr. Fenton knew only that his acquaintance was the chief of a firm of manufacturing chemists, famous for improvements in soda water, and a patent pill high in popularity; that he travelled sometimes to take the prospects of the house correctly; was a

family man, and had money to spare for portraits. My master regretted his absence accordingly. The exchequer was now at low-water mark; sundry anxious inquirers were daily informed that Mr. Gerber was not at home; and our outgoings became late and stealthy.

The tobacconist in the next street waylaid me to discourse about legal proceedings; and Mary Ann unhesitatingly announced one morning that the people at the corner would give no more spirits without money. Mrs. Sutherland could afford no help; her own affairs were rather embarrassed, which was generally the case for sometime before quarter day.

Mr. Fenton took the matter quietly; it was not new to him: but the emptiness of the scrip always made him industrious. He fell to finishing the lady in white from memory, and set me to grind colors and prepare canvas as though a series of portraits had been ordered, pausing occasionally to wish for the little man from Bristol.

The most mischievous of the Fates must have heard that wish. While we were at work about the middle of the same afternoon, somebody at the door said "Dr. Frost!" and a stout little man, with a weather-beaten complexion, a bustling look, and sandy hair sprinkled with grey, entered, and proved to be the long-expected sitter.

"Here I am, Mr. Gerber," he said, in reply to my master's greetings, "come to sit in my travelling trim, you see. The fact is, Mrs. Frost prefers

to have me taken in this great-coat, and I have little time to spare, so set to work and sketch me. I am sure the Hornblowers will all want their portraits when they see mine; that's my wife's family, I mean; people of consideration, sir, in Bristol;" and he seated himself.

"Old Dr. Hornblower, my respected predecessor and father-in-law, was a remarkable man: he invented the patent dinner pill which we manufacture. It is a specific. We have sent a ton weight of that pill to the West Indies, and ten thousand boxes at least go to London every month. I always observe they want more about Christmas time. Well, sir, Dr. Hornblower invented it: he was a man of talent, but he had no push, and he knew it: that was a step beyond the common; and when I came to Bristol he saw I had it in me, and took me for his assistant, I must say on a very small salary. The Doctor had no son, but he had four daughters and three nephews-in-law. His practice was not large; they always lived genteelly; and, having no provision for the girls, he married the eldest to me, the remaining three to his nephews, giving each an equal interest in the patent dinner pill; there were four weddings, sir, in the same year, and the precious old Doctor died on the 31st of December."

"Dear me, how very extraordinary; sit a little more out of the shade, sir, if you please," said my master, as he prepared to take the sketch.

"Very, sir," responded his sitter; "but I could

tell you more remarkable things about the firm of Frost and Hornblower;" and forthwith he entered on a continuation of the family chronicles, including births, deaths, and marriages; the domestic habits, early experiences, and general acquirements of the entire connexion; together with sundry particulars regarding their progenitors.

My master appeared to know that his sitter was a man who would and could do all the talking: he worked away, now and then throwing in a question or note of exclamation, which only called forth another tale, and sent Dr. Frost on with renewed energy.

I took some note of the Doctor in after times, for reasons to be told in the progress of this story. His title was derived from no university; his education was that of an apothecary; he had emulated medical practice, thanks to the latitude of British law, but never succeeded, not having invention enough for a good quack, and therefore betook himself to the trading outskirts of the profession. These being within his depth, he helped to found the firm of Frost and Hornblower, grew rich in spite of a large family, retired to a villa at Clifton, and died at a good old age some years before I began to write. There is a tomb-stone in Clifton churchyard which records his virtues and usefulness. It does not say, what I steadfastly believe, that there was nothing in him beyond the multiplication table, except an amazing faculty for gathering up and rehearsing people's histories.

I had stolen many a look at the Doctor, and listened to his details with uncommon interest; not that the history of the Hornblowers had peculiar attractions for me, but it seemed as if Mr. Fenton's sitter was no stranger to my memory. I had seen the brown ruddy face before, how and where I could not find out; and all he told about people in Bristol, got confusedly mixed up with that puzzle.

The picture was to require but two sittings. My master had occasion to paint quickly just then, and Dr. Frost's declarations touching the value of his time were many. I had ground and mixed so much in the previous week that there remained nothing for me to do but retire behind the screen and range at will over Mr. Fenton's books. There, to say the truth, I made my first acquaintance with great authors, and there I was deep in Gil Blas when the Doctor came next day. My friends, if you be of the reading order, a brotherhood by no means on the increase in these printing days, you will remember the glory and the glow which came with your first reading of a real book. There are not many such, you know, in the world's libraries, but the centuries have left us some; and truly that first reading, when it happens early, is an estate surveyed, a palace taken possession of, a legacy paid over to one in full and free of duty. Well, I was glorious in Gil Blas, and so engaged with the stately poverty of his Don, that I heard not a word of the Doctor's narrations, which went on strong

and clear as usual, it appeared much to the amusement of my master, for he laughed and talked through his painting, till my ear was struck by the name of Rollinson. There was a spell of home-brewed wonder sufficient to recall me from Le Sage.

"Yes, sir," said the Doctor, in answer to some remark, "I am thankful to say I know the entire history of that family. Their grandfather was a Bristol man: he failed in business—it was the sugar trade—exactly one hundred years ago. Failures were not so common then; people could not stand them so well; and the old man moved off to Liverpool. It was a humble town then, as old Mrs. Harrison's aunt told me. The Exchange was a sort of timber shed, the trade was in fishing smacks with Ireland, and once a year a ship came round the rock from America or the West Indies. Being a quiet out-of-the-way place, old Rollinson chose it for a city of refuge after his failure. His family had been merchants for—let me see—five generations. The old merchants of Bristol, you understand, were mostly gentlemen born: trade was so ancient there that the squires thought it no discredit; and having a good strip of pedigree to turn on, the Rollinsons were the proudest among them. Mr. Gerber, that pride runs in the family yet to its utmost branches. I have heard that their grandfather had thoughts of changing his name, but I cannot vouch for that: however, he settled in Hall Street, just behind St. Nicholas' Church, and took on agencies. He had

three sons—one was an attorney, who settled at Preston, got into the Pretender's business, and fled to North America; the other ran away to sea, and was lost somewhere in the Spanish main; but the eldest lived on in Hall Street, did the best he could, and brought up a family of two sons and three daughters. The girls all got married in time—one of them to Old Rose, of Rosebank—that was a go for her—but everybody says she was a beauty when the hoops were going; another was old Fenton's first wife—I mean the millowner—he was a small man then; and the third, it was her last chance they say, married old John Favoursham. Mr. Gerber, I could tell you the history of their families, and I will; but now I'm coming to how the Rollinsons got rich. They always kept up a sort of gentility and had a great notion of themselves; but after their grandfather's failure the family had a tough job to hold their heads above water: do what they would, money would not come. Old Mrs. Harrison's aunt—that woman had a treasure of a memory—used to say that nobody in these lazy times could understand the endeavours Dick Rollinson and his sons made to get hold of something. There was not a business within her knowledge they did not try—none of them just went into the Gazette; but somehow they could not get on, till at last, Mr. Gerber—I suppose you know what made a town of Liverpool. It's not talked of now, but that African trade—they called it so latterly, you understand—was the

making of some uncommonly respectable houses; and the young Rollinsons, as people called them then, thought they would try their fortune. It was when the girls were all married and gone—for the boys were the youngest—Richard and Edward, that's their names, sir—I'm told the family never wanted Dicks and Neds—handsome, sour-looking young men, people say they were; nobody cared to come too near them, though they could make themselves very agreeable to ladies. Edward, in particular, had a keen eye after good matches, but he never made one. Well, they had a grand-aunt at Bristol, who lent them money to buy shares in a ship; it was on their father's bond, at fifty per cent. interest. They paid all, and it set the old lady up: she went mad afterwards, sir, in Wilberforce's time, and talked for evermore about negroes and the Middle Passage; but that has nothing to do with my story. The Rollinsons went out, first Richard and then Edward—of course it was said they went to the West Indies, for the thing was falling into disrepute, though fortunes were made by it—and shackles as well as other conveniences for the ships were got ready in a quiet way. They stayed abroad for years: the old man said they were doing well, but he would never give particulars: letters and money came to him through the shipowners; latterly, he took strong to rum punch, and, always at the seventh tumbler, used to wish that Dick and Ned had some other business. He

died about the passing of Wilberforce's Act. Mr. Gerber, that would have finished Liverpool but for the war. However, to go on: years passed, the three sisters died one after another; old Fenton's wife, I believe, went first; and nothing was heard of the Rollinsons till about the time that Lord Wellington went to Spain, when they came home weather-beaten, grey-haired men, looking, I'm told, not an hour younger than they do to-day. They came home rich, but it is said that either on sea or on shore a quarrel took place between them about their gatherings, and they have never spoken since. Richard's share is known to be the largest; his money is all in the Bank of England, and I have never met with anybody that could tell me how much it was; but he went over the water and bought a property lying among the moorlands of Birkenhead, built himself a great new house on it, laid out a park; and it is awful to see the high wall, iron gates, and castle-like turrets yonder among the lonely moors. They talk of building over there, and getting up a new town out of the smoke; but schemes will never end. As for Edward, he went to Scotland, and what he was about there for five good years is the only thing I have not made out; but at last he married his present lady (Miss Mackenzie, amazingly well-connected, only she can never be seen at the full of the moon); then he came over and bought Oak Park here, repaired the old house for himself, and went into partnership with old Fenton. They say

he has grown powerfully religious, and taken to High Calvinism; he has three daughters, uncommon plain, but they teach continually in the Sunday School; and that child Richard, that is to be heir, talks so like a preacher, I'm told it does the factory boys good to hear him. Now, I must tell you about old Richard and my own misfortunes. When the new house and the park were up people wondered he did not marry, though I never heard that any lady set her cap for him. The county gentry did not look after his acquaintance, which does seem odd to me, for money's money I say, no matter how it's made; but old Richard had no sociableness in him. People could not make out what he meant to do with his great house, for all the establishment he took in, besides his man servant, Morgan, who boasted of his descent from a famous buccanier, and could swear over any man I ever heard, was Mrs. Broom, the lame housekeeper, who still looks after the place, her one son for a kitchen maid, and the other for a gardener. He kept a land steward though, and a perfect army of out-door labourers at work in all seasons—ditching, draining, and otherwise improving his property. The men said he was not a bad master, and knew about as much of the management of land as any farmer in Cheshire, which was strange, considering how he had spent his time. He did not turn to religion, like his brother, but kept on the same old sinner, never going to church or chapel; and the only enter-

tainment he had was in drinking bouts with Morgan, which came off on set days, once a month or so. The two used to lock themselves in the wainscot-parlour at nightfall, with twelve mould candles, a box of limes, and a jar of brandy. I'm told their singing of sea-songs might be heard a mile off, and the shouts and curses grew dreadful towards morning. At other times master and man went about as sober as judges, and never let out anything of past doings, except that they had been together twenty years; and Morgan now and then called his master captain. You may suppose old Richard's motions were well-minded by his brothers-in-law, not to speak of nephews and nieces; but he was the very man to keep them at a distance; and so he did, all but the Favourshams. Old John was dead; so was his wife; but there was a daughter Grizzle, and two sons, John and Gurney. The two G.'s, as my grandmother called them—she was a woman of wit, sir—are there yet, and ever will be, in my opinion; but old Richard took a fancy to John, and that showed his taste; for with all his faults he was the best of the family, but good fortune came on him too early and spoiled the boy. He was not eighteen when old Richard took him home, got a master to teach him Greek and Latin for two years, and sent him off to college. There, either his good prospects were too much for him or the young man fell into bad company; for his doings were past the common and got worse every term,

though nobody in Liverpool knew them, till at last he was plucked, besides being over head and ears in debt; and, as it was thought, through downright fear of the old man, John Favoursham enlisted in a marching regiment and was sent to Ireland. On his travels there he married a poor soul brought up, I may say, in Romish darkness, though there was something respectable about her. Miss Grizzle scolded three days without stopping when she heard it; but to save time I must tell you that a sort of peace was restored in the long run between John and his relations, and he left his wife and child with them when the regiment sailed for America. I saw them at the house, sir, in former times.

"The poor woman was not idle, but she kept a good opinion of John, and wrote continually to the War Office, till she was informed 'that private John Favoursham had deserted six months before —it was supposed to avoid the consequences of an act of insubordination—and had not since been heard of.' Since that I understand he has married another wife somewhere in the United States. You may look astonished, Mr. Gerber, but when a man makes one false step, such as being plucked or getting into debt, there's no saying where he will stop. The Favourshams had taken in John's wife and child chiefly in hopes that old Richard would relent, as he did not choose another heir; but from the day of the enlistment he never entered their house nor spoke a word to one

of them. I was beginning practice then — I may say, without vanity—on the smallest possible capital.

"My grandmother brought me up—I'll tell you the particulars of my history some other day—she was the widow of an apothecary of some note, sir. My grandfather invented a salve that was famous, though nobody knows it now. After his death my grandmother kept the shop and sold drugs herself, at the east corner of Old Bridge Street. She gave me a medical education, but I could not get into the navy for want of a little University-regulation, you understand; and though the custom was small, I was always behind the counter, pounding away, and my grandmother told people what cures I had effected.

"I don't know why old Richard took me into his service; but I'll tell you why he sent me adrift. My grandmother and I had great hopes when he began to frequent our shop for sarsaparilla, and the housekeeper's son came to me with a cut finger; but judge of our feelings when one day I was sent for posthaste to Moor Hall, and bidden to bring my best drugs with me, for Mr. Rollinson was ill. That was a sore sickness, Mr. Gerber, and the queerest ever I prescribed for. Morgan said it was the remains of a Guinea fever which came back every seven years. I went to work with great courage, considering my greenness in the business; but drugs had no effect, good or bad: old Richard grew worse every day,

and I, being young and simple, thought it was time one night, when he got delirious and began to rave about three doctors he had hanged, to warn his relations that they might get the will made. The night was pouring like the first of the Flood. I just stepped down to our neighbours the Favourshams, at six o'clock, and told them my honest opinion that he could not last till morning. It was a mistake, sir; but human judgment is fallible. Before twelve that night, however, they gathered: there was not a soul of his relations out of the pinafore that was not round the old man, with I can't say how many lawyers and clergy. Just as the clock struck three, and they were in a stiff dispute about his will, old Richard came to his senses, and his strength too, it would appear, for Miss Grizzle says the roar he gave for his pistols was terrible. Morgan ran swearing to get them; how they got out I never learned, but somebody must have told what I said to the Favourshams, for the old sinner sent me word next morning that if ever I came on his ground again he would make an example of me. Of course I could have prosecuted for intimidation, but my grandmother's advice was to let sleeping dogs lie, and soon after I went to Bristol. To be plain, sir, my practice went first. Old Richard recovered so rapidly that the common people said I was no doctor; but it was a providential occurrence, and made me Dr. Hornblower's son-in-law. My grandmother

used to compare the whole story to the selling of Joseph into Egypt. She was a wonderful woman, sir. But to proceed with old Richard. He recovered, as I said, to the great disappointment of his friends; and whether it was their gathering that frightened him, or anything that happened in his fever, he left the house as soon as possible, and never has spent a night in Moor Hall since, but wanders over England and the Continent with his man Morgan—I'll warrant as great a reprobate as ever. Now, sir, is not that a curious history?"

"Very," said my master; "it is a wonder you remember it all, Doctor."

"My memory's good, Mr. Gerber. I inherited that gift, I may say, from my grandmother; but as my time's growing short I had better tell you something about the sisters' families. We will begin with old Fenton; I know most about him. When he married Barbara Rollinson his standing was not much better than a foreman in one of the three mills he owns now. From that position he raised himself by industry and economy, though people call him a skin-flint, and maybe with reason: but we can't discuss that at present. Barbara Rollinson was a help to him, for besides being a careful woman, her father gave her part of the money that came home, and they say old Fenton bought his first share in the mill with [illegible] She died thirty years ago, leaving two sons: [illegible] of them was killed, poor child, by an accident;

and the other turned out the scapegrace of the family. Dear me, Mr. Gerber, how quickly you are painting! As I was saying, Harry Fenton, that's the eldest son, turned his back on the finest prospect for money-making in Manchester. His father gave him a good education, going the length of Cambridge, which I think was unnecessary, and would have made him junior partner; but nothing on earth would serve the fellow except to go to London and be an artist. That was his ruin, Mr. Gerber; not that I count his painting such a disgrace to the family, but he learned all kinds of bad courses."

"Freddy, Freddy!" cried my master, flinging down his brush; "where can that boy be?"

I had heard all, but in my simplicity imagined I was really wanted, and jumped out crying—"Here, sir."

My master's face was as black as a thunder cloud, but the look of bitter mortification that crossed it when he saw me come from behind the screen, struck me to the heart.

"Don't be angry with him, Mr. Gerber," said the good-natured Doctor, "I am sure he has been reading some good book there."

"Oh, yes, Doctor," said my master sharply; "we all read good books when we can't get bad ones. Go down, Freddy," he continued, turning to me, and there was more of confusion than anger in his tone; "look about for my sketch book, and put the loose leaves right in their

places : I think you will find it in the parlour."

I knew that my absence was the thing in demand, and made no haste back with the sketch book. Indeed, the prospect of facing my master was by no means pleasant; though never angry with me before, I knew he had a temper, and felt myself guilty of listening with all my might. Not only had the Doctor's story been curious, and in some sort entertaining, but it furnished a solution to some of the earliest problems of my life. I now knew who was the old man, said to be really going. In Dr. Frost I recognized the dripping man of my remembrance, and many mysterious talks and doings, which puzzled my childhood, were thereby explained. It also cast some light on Mr. Rollinson, though with his comings to our house, or even the existence of my cousins, the Doctor was manifestly unacquainted. I had long made up my mind that there was something very particular in that business, of which Mr. Fenton must be aware, from his frequent questions about Ned and Dick, and the occasional remarks I had overheard passing between him and Mrs. Sutherland. I knew too that he was Harry Fenton, the young man who had turned his back on the finest prospect, etc. But a sadder discovery had been made to me concerning my father's absence and my poor mother's troubles. By it I learned why she said he had forgotten both her and me; but, getting up in the world,

as I was then, the disgrace of the thing disturbed me most, and, with the relentless virtue of almost fifteen, I took a solemn resolution to disown, and never speak of him.

It was not prudent to venture up stairs though the sketch book was rectified. There were sounds from below which indicated that Mrs. Sutherland was on the high way to one of her "narvous turns;" and, as a temporary resource, I looked out of the window on the dull grey afternoon and our queer quiet street. There was a man smoking out of the window of one of the opposite cottages. There was a woman commanding two children at the door of another; and a foreign-looking gentleman, as I mentally styled him, in spite of his travel-soiled and careless dress, was slowly pacing along with an eye to the doors and windows. He was like nobody I had ever seen, yet his appearance caught and kept my attention. In size he was neither large nor little, but his figure seemed particularly erect, slender, and finely moulded; his features too were fine, almost classical; he did not seem to have a beard, but his hair, which was longer than most men's, and hung straight without wave or curl, had an intense blackness, matching the *clear* brown of his complexion. Who could he be, and whom did he want in our street? I should have wondered longer at that, but there was a noise in the drawing-room of loud voices and shuffling feet. I heard something about patronising, from Dr. Frost, followed by

an oath from my master, and the little man from Bristol came leaping down stairs at a rate to be explained only by the appearance of his portrait painter, who pursued him with flashing eyes and cane in hand. I am happy to say the Doctor reached the hall door first and got out; but wrath so far overcame my master, that he rushed after him, and aimed a blow, which would have been effective but for the stranger, who had been reading the door plates as the belligerents appeared, and warded off the cane with a small ratan he carried, while the Doctor vanished with threats of actions and damages.

I was at the parlour door, keeping well out of sight, but the astonished countenance with which my master drew back gave me courage to look boldly out.

"My dear Mr. Gerber, what did the fellow do? —don't you know me?" said the stranger, stepping in to him, and stretching out both hands. "Confound it, Harry," he added in a lower tone, as Fenton seemed uncertain what to do, "you would not disown a friend because his coat looks shabby."

"No, old fellow," said my master, brightening into a smile, and heartily shaking the outstretched hands, which I noticed were thin and white, "but that gallipot of a creature made me forget myself, with his boring into people's histories; I'll burn his nasty portrait to-morrow morning, and never paint another for him or one of the Hornblowers while I live."

"Gerber, my boy, there are a great many nasty people and their portraits, in this world," said the stranger, looking as if he were perfectly at home in the matter, and had lived with my master for the last seven years; "but I am tired and hungry: won't you give me a dinner or something, for old times' sake?"

"Come along," said Fenton, taking him kindly by the arm. "Freddy, run down and tell Mrs. Sutherland to get dinner ready as quick as she can, for a friend has come to me;" and he went up stairs in something like triumph.

CHAPTER IV.

He was a sinner, friend; but there did lie
Beneath his sinfulness some leaven of good
Whereof such righteous men as you and I
Take no account in their condemning mood.
He had a hand to help—a heart to spare—
A voice that ever for the right was given;
And one true love in spite of clay and care
Stood like a link between his soul and heaven.
—*Tales Half Told.*

When I got down stairs to deliver my message Mrs. Sutherland had reached the noon of her indignation, on account of something Mary Ann had eaten; and scarcely had I mentioned the word dinner, when her entire vengeance turned on me. I had some spirit in those days; and, as my evil stars would have it, attempted to remonstrate. My master's friend was hungry, and must have something. That drop made the cup overflow, and with a volley of names, from beggar, brat, upwards—and, I must add, a large toasting fork—she pursued me, not daring to give battle, into the room where Mr. Gerber and his friend sat conversing of old times. There she indicted me in due form for having given her impudence in her own kitchen, and demanded that I should be immediately sent home to my papish mother. My master's temper, being so lately disturbed, utterly

gave way on this attack; and with a remark more true than courteous he commanded her withdrawal.

"Me drunk!" cried Mrs. Sutherland.

By-the-bye, she had become very difficult to subdue of late; and flinging herself on the sofa, she set forth, in a succession of shouts, that she was eaten out of house and home, that her money was borrowed and spent in gin, that my master was a deceitful villain, and she would let the world know his tricks. That resolution our landlady seemed in a fair way of accomplishing; but when the man so threatened could only grind his teeth and swear, the stranger was by her side, and had taken the raging woman's hand in the most affectionate and confidential manner.

"My dear madam," said he, "your case is a very peculiar one; but I have no doubt, if we talked it over in private, some arrangement might be made."

Mrs. Sutherland was not deaf to the voice of sympathy. She entered without delay on a compound history of her grievances, in the midst of which our new acquaintance handed her down stairs with a gravity and grace I could not help admiring.

How he settled matters I cannot pretend to say, having taken refuge in my own room, for my master had begun to walk up and down, muttering to himself. The noise, however, gradually died away. I heard the stranger return, and a

deep talk between him and my master, which seemed to grow more cheerful by degrees, till Mary Ann, having extemporized a dinner, summoned me to tell the gentlemen. I must have entered the room unperceived, at least nobody minded me, and my master went on talking over something like a bill which he held firmly between his fingers.

"It's too much, Lavance, for anybody to lend me, but I'll return it if I live; there's money to be made by portraits: hang it, I thought of doing better once."

"So you will, my dear fellow," said the stranger, clapping his broad back; "but put up that bit of paper, and say no more about it: you remember Baden Baden. Harry, would you not give a man a chance of getting off obligations? Besides, you know you have promised to make an artist of me: that will be a tough business; but I'll come to your painting room the moment it's opened. Freddy, my boy," he added, addressing me, as if he had been seven years acquainted, "has Mary Ann got the dinner ready?"

My master said nothing for some minutes after we were seated at table; he seemed in a white study, and had put up the piece of paper. The good-natured, careless man was soon himself again, talking and laughing with Lavance, as even I learned to call the stranger, about people and places known in his travels on the continent. Nobody ever told me, but I found out by the

current of things, as boys will, that his new, or rather old friend, had lent Mr. Gerber money sufficient to clear off his embarrassments in Manchester at least, and redeem him temporarily out of the hands of Mrs. Sutherland.

We all three spent a pleasant evening. There were two bottles of wine on the table. I got a glass out of each; and when, under that familiarising influence, I called the stranger Lavance, and my master had commenced a solemn rebuke, he shook hands with me, it seemed, in real excitement, said I was John's son, and left half a guinea among my fingers. I went in great glory to bed, dreamed that my mother and I were rich and living together in an eight-roomed house, with two servants and a pony chaise. Next morning Johnson came with the darned socks and a letter from her, reminding me that the first quarter was finished; hoping that Mr. Fenton would let me come; wondering how tall I had grown; and winding up with "Dear Freddy, you will be sorry to hear that I am not quite so strong as I have been, and your cousin Dick has run away." While I was yet in the first astonishment of this news, my master came down; and as Johnson had brought no letters for himself, I put mine into his hand.

"Whew," says he, "this will be news for the old boy in Oak Park; and won't she raise the dust about it? Freddy, you must keep this to yourself till we get clear out of the house. I'll keep

my word, of course, and let you go home if you like; but I'm just going to open my painting-room in King Street, and shall want you so much. I know your mother is a reasonable woman; and if you tell her how the case stands in this way, Freddy, that there is a world of great people's portraits to be painted, and I am taking art-students to teach, which will be all true, she would not ask you home yet a little; perhaps, however," and his look grew slightly embarrassed, "I had better write the explanation myself."

I was disappointed, but not grievously. So much of novelty and grandeur appeared to be coming that I was half reconciled to my master's arrangement, which I shrewdly suspected had been made rather to prevent disclosures at home than from any real want of my services in the opening of his painting-room.

Mr. Lavance had gone away late in the evening before; but that day the revolution in our affairs began. My master dressed himself and went out in the forenoon, a proceeding so unusual that it struck both Mary Ann and Mrs. Sutherland with dismay. In the evening, to their still greater amazement, he settled his surrounding accounts. The tobacconist, the chemist, and the house at the corner were all paid off, besides a company of smaller creditors, beginning with the colour-man, and ending with the laundress. This display of the ways and means left on the genteel boarding-house an impression of general respect, or

rather awe, which did not disappear for some time; and the "narvous turns," when they did take place, were much less stormy: but our stay in that peaceful mansion was drawing to a close.

My master took me with great publicity next morning to see his painting-room in King Street. It was the first floor of one of the brick houses in that now somewhat old-fashioned business street. All that quarter of the town was then new, flourishing, and supposed to be out of the smoke. There was an architect's office on the ground floor; a musician occupied the second; Johnson lived somewhere in the third, and came to meet us with a look as bright as Midsummer, informing my master "that the rooms had been scoured out, and though Slattery was stiff at first he had come to and agreed to give up the furniture." Mr. Fenton forthwith sent for an upholsterer, and there was mighty work between him, Johnson, and myself, assisting, advising and consulting through that and the following day, on the hanging of drapery and mirrors, the setting up of busts and vases; not to speak of carpets and less artistic matters. My master had occupied that painting-room many a year before. The furniture which Slattery had agreed to give up had been selected with his wonted taste and regardlessness of expense, and the place certainly looked handsome when the tradesman and his assistants had done their devoirs. The large painting-room with, my master said, the best light in the world, and fur-

niture which might have served for Titian's studio when Charles the Fifth sat to him; his own bedroom opening off it; the little dressing-room turned into a berth for me; and a fourth chamber, styled the library, in which all the books stowed away behind the screen at Mrs. Sutherland's, together with my master's most esteemed chattels, the boxing gloves, etc., were neatly arranged, and to be seen only by his particular friends.

In the removal of these valuables from the genteel boarding-house, I had expected that Mrs. Sutherland would have been a lioness in the way; but to my surprise she made no demonstration. Her reign was over for some time, and a terror of final deposition had fallen upon her, for in the preparation-days of his painting-room my master adjourned to the Bible and Crown. I know not what the place is now, but then it was a family hotel in the Tory interest, and gentlemen of decidedly high principles stopped there. When I went over, according to special orders, with the portmanteau his own hands had packed overnight, the waiter informed me "that Mr. Fenton had just arrived from London," and I found my master at breakfast in the blue-parlour looking as if he believed the intelligence himself. It was the news of the day. Under its shadow he made his arrangements, went to the coffee-houses, and was recognized by old acquaintances. Mr. Gerber was no more named, Leopold Terrace was avoided, all transfers from that quarter being intrusted to

Johnson, who, I am bound to say, executed his commission with a celerity and completeness worthy of all praise.

There was no man in our circle on whom the revolution whose progress I am relating told with more signal effect than Johnson. During our abode in the genteel boarding-house he had appeared as the silent and somewhat sombre messenger who came and went without observation, except that nobody seemed pleased with him, and he returned that general compliment. Now Johnson was a man in authority, bustling about in the orderly routine fashion peculiar to himself, and very important on the subject of Mr. Fenton. In his service Johnson had been, I afterwards found out, ever since the painting-room was first opened and the artist began to paint the magnates of Manchester. A faithful retainer, though his employment had been of rather a desultory character, broken by long absence and more than one eclipse, such as my master had just come out of; but Johnson remained on the field, holding fast by the nook on the third floor, doing what he could to assist his master, however deep might be the shadow in which he rested, and living on a pension of sixpence a day from Chelsea Hospital. I have said somewhere already that he was a tall military-looking man, with a wooden leg; there were no other tokens of war or uniform about him; but any child would have known that Johnson had been in the army. The man looked as

if discipline had entered into his soul. Wiry and well-preserved against both time and weather, there was an erectness and precision in his doings and sayings which amounted to positive respectability. He touched his hat, he delivered his message, he bought his mutton-chop, and he got drunk (for Johnson did that sometimes) in proper form and according to strict regulations. What constituted the special bond between him and my master I never learned. Johnson always called the painter "your Honor," and had a profound respect for him, which appeared to become latent in his eclipses, for then Johnson was seriously ashamed of him; but always returned to full activity when his debts were paid and the painting-room re-opened.

It was the third recurrence of that golden age, and I believe the most magnificent, which I had the pleasure of witnessing. Johnson hinted, in the fulness of his triumph, that scores had never been so perfectly cleared. For days after the heavy baggage retaken from Slattery was all in its ancient place, pictures, busts, and folios of expensive prints came dropping in,—whether from up the spout or any kindred quarter I cannot say; but Jew-looking boys brought them, and some wanted cleaning. The restoration was complete, even to Mr. Fenton's habits. I had heard him tell Lavance that he would turn a new leaf, and the fact seemed to be accomplished. The house at the corner was forgotten, the tobacconist

was patronized no further than a daily cigar; and though Mrs. Sutherland was allowed to come in a clean silk gown, which it appeared she had, to see the establishment, distance from the genteel boarding-house was the order of the day. To settle this resolve on the best and surest basis a contract for the supplies was made with a cook-shop of great respectability in the neighbourhood. A woman of all-work who dwelt in the basement, and said she had kept her own drawing-room "before her old man was transported," was engaged to keep our apartments in order under the supervision of Johnson, for he had a persuasion "that women could do nothing without oversight;" and our housekeeping began.

I have lived in many well-regulated families, households presided over by ladies of amazing management, homes where domestic comfort reigned and the breakfast bell was rung to a minute; but never had I part in a habitation of more ease and less annoyance than the bachelor-hall and painting-room of Harry Fenton. Johnson oversaw all things; I did what I liked; and by way of having work in hand my master fell to finishing the portrait of Dr. Frost. I know that he sent it to Bristol free of all charges, and the Doctor sent back a letter of thanks, closing with an enquiry why he had called himself Gerber, and a promise that the story should never be breathed to any mortal. My master swore a great deal when that letter came to hand; but

Frost made out the matter, doubtless, by diligent enquiry, and I heard him give all the particulars years after.

In the mean time, Mr. Fenton's arrival from London, which had appeared in the "Manchester Guardian," became known to his friends, and they began to drop in. At first, with some circumspection, for the artist's sudden re-establishment among them was not a fully understood matter, and people wanted to know how the land lay. There came a fat man who took snuff, and insisted that the times were bad; there came a thin one, who would talk of nothing but the Lancashire hunt and the county families; there came others who had nothing particular about them; and then I remember three plain young ladies, in out-of-the-world bonnets and contracted dresses of dark brown something. The eldest was crossly fast, the second was crossly slow, and the youngest looked always on the eve of rebellion. My master spoke to them with extreme gravity. They talked of having their portraits some day, to hang up in the school, and when they went he told me in a reverential tone, "they were old Rollinson's daughters, from Oak Park." The next was a lady dressed in the best of the fashion, large and fair, and like a great wax work, with the blue eyes, pink cheeks, and flaxen hair appointed for those silent damsels. She was followed by five boys, from seven up to my own age, all very unlike herself, and looking decidedly saucy.

"My dear darling Harry," she cried, seizing both hands of my master, who indeed seemed glad to see her, "how could you stay away so long? I have been so distressed about you."

If anything in her passage through this vale of tears had ever distressed the lady, no trace of it remained, for she looked the easiest in her own mind, of any mortal I ever saw.

"Over the whole Continent?" she said, repeating my master's account of his absence, and seating herself in the most comfortable corner of the sofa, "and left us all to break our hearts. William has been quite as much distracted as myself, but business occupies him so, poor man; and here's Frank and George and Willy and Robert, and your own namesake Harry; the dear affectionate boys would not go to school, but must come and see their darling uncle."

I must say the dear affectionate boys saluted their darling uncle with very little ceremony; but my master and the lady talked with great cordiality, about the pleasure they would have in each other's society, "the terrible drudge poor William was to business," and the taking of the portraits in a family group; and I made out that she was Mrs. William Fenton, the painter's sister-in-law. While they talked, there stepped in a little stout lady, some years older, much less fashionably dressed, and evidently more accustomed to household cares and duties. Mrs. William Fenton saluted her as "her dear mamma." My master

received her rather formally, but she welcomed him "back to Manchester" in a tone of quiet kindness, called Mrs. Fenton "Juliar," and shook hands with everybody, including the five boys and myself, before she sat down. Then, in the same quiet manner, she instituted an inquiry into my master's continental travels and London residence, the education of Mrs. Fenton's boys, and my own antecedents. When satisfied on these points, the little stout lady entered into matters at home: "That George had decided on taking to business, though his own inclination had been to the law, but his father wished it, and of course George knew his duty: that Mary Ann had come home from school, and was growing quite useful about the house: that Eliza had finished her toilet cover: that Sarah Jane was going to do an urn rug in cross-stitch, and they were all thinking of a visit to Rosebank that summer."

"What a charming family," said Mrs. Fenton, smoothing down her tabinet, "so full of industry and prudence; has not mamma great reason to be proud of them?"

"Indeed I have great reason to be thankful," said the little stout lady, looking at the time-piece; "but, dear me, it is a quarter past, and your father promised to meet me in your rooms, Harry, at one o'clock."

This announcement seemed to make my master singularly uncomfortable. He twisted his buttons and pulled his wristbands, as I have often seen

him do when under Mrs. Sutherland's orations, and the effect was rather heightened when in walked a tall, erect old gentleman, with dark hair, slightly sprinkled with grey, and an active wiry look which seemed to defy the course of time. It is recorded that man was formed out of the dust of the earth; but I have a notion that some of the specimens to be seen in our trading towns, have a goodly proportion of the flint in them; and old Fenton, the respected mill-owner, family man, and I believe deacon in the King-street Chapel, was one of these. Hard and keen and cold, he looked on his son, as the latter advanced with a rebuked discomforted countenance, trying to look well pleased, for appearance sake. There was a marked resemblance between them, but the easy good humour and ruddy flush of my master's face, had no part in his father's.

"You're come back, Harry," said that amiable old man, giving him a thumb and two fingers to shake; "commenced trade again, I see;" and he glanced contemptuously at Dr. Frost's unfinished portrait. What my master answered I could not hear, but it was something about being glad to see him well.

"Oh yes," said the old gentleman, "people are always well that do well. I suppose you have heard that your brother George is going into the factory. I'll make him a junior partner if he behaves well. Mrs. William, are these boys all yours? They ought to be at school to-day."

"So they should," said Mrs. William; "but the poor children wanted to see their uncle's room: they heard you were coming here to-day," she added with an insinuating smile; and the flinty face softened at that piece of preposterous flattery.

"I hope they will be good boys," said the monarch of mill and household. "How's William? Tell him I've thought about the partnership, and he may come over to-morrow at half-past ten. But you have not six children, Mrs. William?"

"Oh dear, no," said Mrs. William.

"Father, that boy is the son of poor John Favoursham; he was ill-off at home, and I took him to help in my painting-room," said my master in a sort of whisper.

"Oh, did you? Well, 'tis to be hoped he'll turn out better than his father! Come, Sarah Ann, the dinner will be spoiled, waiting for us;" and old Fenton marched quickly out, followed by his third spouse, Mrs William and her five boys, all endeavouring in vain to gain his notice.

My master shut the door after the retiring company, who had one and all taken a rather summary leave of him; then seized his brush with a look of mighty resolution, and fell to work, muttering something about purse-pride and mere tradesmen. I understood my cue by this time, and took to grinding Prussian blue with great energy. There was silence in the painting-room for sometime, which was at length broken by

Mr. Fenton saying, "Freddy, how do you like my father?"

"He is a nice old gentleman," said I, grinding harder.

"He is rich, Freddy," said Fenton, "and I am his eldest son; but they all despise me because I took to painting and can't make money—curse it! Maybe I have not been always as wise or as steady as I should have been, but things went against me from the first. I lost my mother early; I have had nothing but stepmothers since; my father was hard with me; and my young brother—Freddy, you are named for him; I know your father did it for my sake and our college days; you have a likeness to him sometimes, but not half so handsome; there never was such a boy in Lancashire. My mother left him beginning to walk; and for ten years, night or day, at school or at home, we were never parted. I loved him, and he loved me, as nobody ever did or will do; but he liked riding; father would never allow of a horse; and when we went to Rosebank in the holidays—I was sixteen and Frederic was eleven—my uncle kept a hunter then—I let the boy mount him for a gallop, and he was thrown on the Derby road and killed before my eyes. Freddy, nothing ever went well with me since. I went to Cambridge, because father intended me for the Church; he was not a Dissenter then, and somebody had promised him a living; your father and I got acquainted there at Trinity; he was a good

fellow, but I could not stand it, having always a love, I may say a talent, for painting. The old man has never forgiven me for that, though he let me go to Opie, and I should have come to something in London, but there was a girl that used me downright shabbily; not that I cared much —Freddy, my boy, never set your heart upon a woman; the most of them are deceivers, and the rest not worth looking at—but I would have married her." And Mr. Fenton looked as Curtius or the Decii might have looked when meditating the deeds that have made their names immortal. "I would, Freddy, if she had behaved with common civility; but it is all over, and one gets into bad company when one's friends and family don't stand up for one; but I'll turn a new leaf, and make myself a position above them and their mills."

My master had been talking more to himself than to me. The man was solitary in the midst of his many relations, and the pressure of the moment made him unburden his mind. It is strange what comfort most people find in telling their story to any listener; and I remarked that, from the day of Dr. Frost's disclosures, in which my master and I were equally involved, he took me in a manner into confidence, and talked out whatever troubled him when we were alone.

He had left off painting, and walked up and down, speaking on in the same desultory fashion of his father's hardness, of his dead brother, and

the girl that used him shabbily, all which seemed to stand in his mind as so many apologies for his own failings. By the way, they were themes to which he recurred in all times of disappointment and vexation. The lady, in particular, was often reflected on; but all I could hear of her history was that she had been the daughter of a half-pay Captain living somewhere near Kensington, that she wrote verses, and my master called her "Sappho." I also remember that, in times of unusual excitement, when the "new leaf" was becoming the old one once more, he used to draw a gaunt-looking girl, in a blue dress, seated at a piano, and somebody looking over her shoulder. Mr. Fenton would take great pains to finish that sketch, though the work was never long on hand, nor did the dress or attitude ever vary to my knowledge. He would color it carefully, rub it clean, and then, in a most ostentatious manner, fling it in the fire, summoning me to the sacrifice with, "Look, Freddy, there's her picture—that's to show how little I regard the jilt;" after which he would edify me with the entire worthlessness of the fair sex, and the wisdom of despising all their arts, as he did; but I am anticipating.

My master was walking up and down, brush in hand, and talking as I have told, when we heard a knock, and in came two young men—some people would have called them boys, for they did not look five years older than myself. The first was tall, straight, and handsome, with a face that

might have served for a certificate of character—it was so frank and trusty; but there was more energy than intellect in it; and a determination to have and hold lay in the hard blue eyes, and reminded me of old Fenton. The second was tall, too, but very thin, loose hung and stooping; he shuffled in his walk, he had a rustic, almost clownish look, hair of a whity-brown, and I found out he was near-sighted.

"Don't you know me, Harry?" said the handsome young man, grasping my master's hand; "I am your brother George, and this is Robert Rose. I have been down at Rosebank taking a holiday before I go to business: it is my father's wish, and no doubt the best thing for me; but Robert came up with me this morning, and we heard you were in town. I dare say you would not know him either."

"Glad to see you, George; how you have grown, making an old man of me," said Fenton, warmly returning his brother's shake-hands; "and you, Robert, have turned out a man too. How are they all at Rosebank? how does the old place look? and how is your uncle?"

Robert's reply was made in a sort of frightened mutter, of which I could only hear that the orchard was never so laden, that uncle was getting old, and Lucy was coming home for good at Midsummer.

"She'll be a woman now," said Fenton, "and a pretty one I'll be bound, breaking all your

hearts; well, I must see her as soon as she comes home; you know I promised to paint that picture for your uncle before her next birthday."

"He was talking of it only yesterday," said George, and I saw a sort of flush pass over Robert's sheepish face as he moved away and sat down in a corner.

The two brothers talked very much like old acquaintances. George inquired after Harry's travels; told him the news of Manchester and its environs since he left; how Mr. Jackson had retired, and Mr. Smith failed; that young Robinson had gone to the West Indies, and old Mrs. Clarke was dead. In short, they had a most suitable visiting discourse. Robert Rose said nothing, but that the painting-room was beautiful; then George delivered his mother's compliments, for my master and self to come to tea at six, and took his leave with great cordiality.

I forgot to mention that he was no less cordial with me, for my master, perhaps in right of our late confidence, introduced me as his cousin; but I did not like that young man from the first; there was something in his steady nature that repelled and fretted mine, though I knew not exactly what fault to find with him. It was not that he patronized me, or showed off his own advantages of rank and years: George was too manly and sensible for that. It was not that he reflected even by implication on the Favoursham history: George was too good-natured, and I "was a con-

nexion of the family." Perhaps it was the antagonism of character which is generally most felt on first acquaintance; perhaps it was the influence of our hostile stars which fell on me before the time. Whatever it was, George Fenton did not seem conscious of it; his was a mind not to be moved by such unsubstantial things; but he was kind and considerate to me in those days, and we gradually became what is called very good friends.

I accompanied my master to Mrs. Fenton's tea at the hour appointed. He dressed himself in his best, was particular about my attire, and went with a strange mixture of pride and trepidation to his father's house. It stood in Hanover Street, a part of Manchester which was growing old and crowded even then. Mr. Fenton had occupied it ever since he bought his first share in a mill; he had built it two stories higher, and made a breakfast room of the garden; it was his pleasure to hold fast by old fashions as he got rich, and we had tea in a wainscot-parlour decorated with family needlework. There were the Sarah Jane, the Eliza, and the Mary Ann, of whose rug, etc., I had heard in the painting-room. They were all large, commonplace, heavily dressed young ladies, with middle-class and Manchester, as it were, inscribed upon them. Mary Ann was the youngest and the prettiest; Sarah Jane was the eldest, and had the reddest hair, besides a commanding turn; George was the only son; Robert Rose was called "cousin;"

and there was a quiet little man, with a pair of keen black eyes and one shoulder considerably higher than the other, whom they called "Mr. Temple," and I heard "that he was a music-master, who taught the girls, and had a singing class connected with the chapel."

There also sat my grand uncle-in-law, the mighty Mr. Fenton, at the round table of dark mahogany —not like Arthur among his knights, but in far more absolute sovereignty. I had many an occasion to admire the unlimited sway of that old man. It must have been for the flint that was in him, but never was Sultan or Caliph more reverenced, served, and dreaded by all around him. From the pattern of the dark blue china to the choice of George's profession, everything was accounted for as being "Mr. Fenton's wish;" and I think his third spouse would have considered it proper that the family inheritance in Paradise should be mapped out on the same principle. Whatever her predecessors in old Fenton's heart and home might have been, she, good woman, was a staunch supporter of his government. She had but one formula of faith, practice, or feeling, and that was duty, which to her signified doing whatever was commanded by established authority—making money if possible, and letting nothing go to waste. I have no doubt that the third Mrs. Fenton led a quiet life under that confession; at least she kept a very orderly house: the family, indeed, looked as if they had all wills of their own, but these remained in abey-

ance for the present, and old Fenton "sat as a king and saw no sorrow." Though a tough, I must say he was not a grim tyrant. His welcome of his eldest son was hearty if not warm; he mentioned my father's misdoings only twice in the course of the entertainment, and noticed myself with a sort of gruff condescension.

Of course I worked hard for good graces, and being the little boy of the company, enjoyed the privilege of young gentlemen in that position,—namely, observing all that I was not expected to see. Among these notes I remember that my master did not look at his ease, though he did a deal to make himself agreeable, especially to the old man; that the music-master was in high favor with the whole family, and reverenced its monarch, if possible, more than Mrs. Fenton; that George and Robert Rose wished to learn drawing from my master, but the one waited for his father's permission, and the other for his uncle's, of whom I also gathered he was believed to be heir-apparent. It was a very sedate evening, like all I ever saw in that solid house: all the ladies worked—all the gentlemen talked, young and old, about trade and getting on. To do Mr. Harry Fenton justice, he came out powerfully on his prospects and expectations when the prodigal feeling had gone a little off; and it must have told with some effect, for henceforth he, and I as his satellite, manifestly rose in family estimation: his father said "he hoped they should see him

often, and George might go to the painting-room for an hour or so after work in the evening; a little drawing would do him no harm."

My master's recognition by the Fentons was the signal for the rest of his friends and relatives to welcome him back with the usual formalities. Mrs. William gave a party, to which half the carriages in Manchester came. She occupied one of the new handsome houses in Charlotte Square; her drawing-room was superbly furnished; one footman opened the door and another announced the company; there were cards, dancing, and a magnificent supper, with the first pine-apple that had been seen in Lancashire that season among the viands. There were a great many young ladies in tamboured muslins and long sashes. There were a great many old ones in Waterloo silks and Brussels caps. I hope the ladies will find me correct in the millinery, for I had been invited to play with the boys, not one of whom would speak to me except Harry, the youngest, and he informed me that I had never been in good society before. It was, indeed, the first party I ever saw, and this world seemed to have no greater grandeur short of the "Arabian Nights." The hostess was resplendent in satin, lace, and jewellery, and looked as amiably satisfied with herself and the whole world as when I first saw her in the painting-room. She presented my master as his "dear long-absent brother" to an anxious busy-looking man, who

seemed to have the counting-house hanging about him, and I understood was the "dreadful drudge, poor William," the only son of old Fenton's second marriage. All the Fentons from Hanover Street were there. I heard the old man make some remarks about over-running the constable at his son's supper table. My master danced, told his travels, drank champagne, and made a speech after supper, when his health was drunk, together with that of our host and hostess. I forget who proposed it, but there was great applause when Mr. Fenton trusted "that the trade of Manchester would increase till the nations were clothed with its prints and the earth covered with its ginghams." He had retrieved his position as the talented man of the family. Sundry festivals in his honor followed: he dined with the owners of mills and the proprietors of print-fields; he went to the country-houses of retired manufacturers; and at length he was invited to Oak Park. The Rollinsons were too serious to give or attend parties. My master was evidently proud of the invitation, which was brought by a grave-looking footman in rich but sober livery: however, he came home early, looked uncommonly tired, and said they were most excellent people.

Of the truth of that observation I had not then an opportunity of judging. The gates of Oak Park and the hearts of its dwellers, seemed equally shut against me. The young ladies, when they

came for their portraits, looked crosser than ever if I were in the way; and the old gentleman, on his visit to the painting-room—by the way that was a serious sitting—hoped, with the rebuking countenance he used to wear when lecturing my cousins, "that Mr. Fenton would make me a good boy." As might be expected, I knew little of my master's friends: none but those who wished to be very considerate took the least notice of me; yet strange to say, as his restoration to gentility became more complete, and the association of his better days twined closer around him, the kindly artist's liking for me seemed to increase. He called me his cousin in all companies, was pleased with any attention shown to "Freddy," found out that I had "extraordinary talents," and appointed me a place in the drawing class which now met in the painting-room every evening. It consisted of George Fenton, Robert Rose (who was then staying in Hanover Street, he said, to finish his education), Mrs. William's eldest son, Willy (a very composed, selfish young gentleman, whom his mother believed to be a prodigy), Mr. Temple the music-master, and Lavance, who was still expected.

I had looked out for him many a day. My master had left messages innumerable with Johnson, in case Mr. Lavance should arrive in his absence. Everybody about the premises had general instructions to make him welcome, and treat him to the best the cook-shop could afford;

but portraits were ordered, sitters came, visitors were never wanting, money was flowing into my master's purse, we were all as busy as bees, and the drawing class had become an institution,—yet no Lavance appeared.

CHAPTER V.

Even as the heavens above, life hath its stars,
Whose rise and setting mark its changeful seasons.
The beautiful that shine upon the heart,
And bring May mornings never known till then—
The well beloved that go down to the dead,
And take from all our years the summers with them—
These are our planets. But the stars of Heaven
Return, each orb to its accustomed place,
Gladdening alike the eye of sage and shepherd;
While those that leave life's horizon, no more
Look out upon this hemisphere of time,—
Wherefore we fancy there must be another.
—*Count Ernest's Play.*

I HAVE always heard that amongst the many experiments which make up medical practice, physicians are wont to place considerable confidence in change. The fact does honor to their professional discernment. A great moral agent can doubtless be made to do good service in physics; and for loosening well-cemented attachments, or undermining old associations, there is nothing I know of like change of scene, particularly if there be any relish of novelty or grandeur in it.

This reflection turns up in reviewing the present portion of my history. I had got many letters from my mother; Browne the carrier brought them still, but they were now delivered publicly,

and there came no darned stockings with them, for I had got new ones, and new everything, through the improved funds and unchanging liberality of Mr. Fenton. She had little news, but that "Ned was growing quite a man and keeping steady; that Dick could not be found or heard tell of; that my uncle, my aunt, and the old house looked just as when I left them, but Mr. Rollinson did not come there now;" and at last "she hoped Mr. Fenton would be so kind as to keep his promise and let me come home at the end of the quarter, that she might see how her own Freddy looked." I had answered all her letters with long details of everything I had heard and seen of my master's kindness and the great doings in Manchester.

I had sent her Lavance's half-guinea and a red silk handkerchief by the trusty hand of Browne, and was saving up the stray sixpences and shillings my master allowed me for pocket-money, to surprise her with a fast-coloured chintz when I went home. I dreamed of her still at nights—always that we were rich and living together. That had become my day dream too; and now that I was learning to draw and my master had said "I would be an artist yet," the vision seemed growing into possibility. Yet I was in no such hurry to get home from the gay painting-room in King Street as I had been when our abode was with Mrs. Sutherland and her "narvous turns." Still I wished to see my mother, perhaps

to astonish them all at home. So months flew away in the doings I have described, and when the long Midsummer days were making closer the atmosphere and hotter the factories of Manchester, my second quarter came to a close. I took the opportunity of the painting-room being cleared of visitors that afternoon, to remind my master that he had promised to let me go home and see my mother.

"So I did, Freddy, and so you shall," said Mr. Fenton, clapping me on the back, "though I do not know how I can spare you in such a press of business; there is nobody can run my messages so well; Johnson has enough on his hands, and he is not the man to send after colors. But I'll tell you what we'll do, Freddy: when the town gets a little slack, and all my sitters go to the country, you and I will start for Liverpool together; I'll take a sketch of your mother and make a beautiful picture—she must have been a pretty woman in her time; we'll get it framed and gilt and hung up in the parlour at home. Won't that take the conceit out of the two old twisters?"

This complimentary designation of my aunt and uncle did not disturb me. I cared as little for their honor then as they had done for my childhood. A similar interchange of sentiments is by no means uncommon between the generations; but the idea of my mother's picture being framed and gilt and hung up in the parlour, was an accession of grandeur of which I had not

dreamed. It reconciled me to awaiting my master's leisure for going to Liverpool. I wrote home full particulars the same day: he inserted a "P.S." to say that I was a good boy and would turn out a great painter. Next week Browne brought a letter full of gladness and gratitude. My mother prayed all sorts of blessings on Mr. Fenton, but added, "Freddy dear, tell him that I have grown an old woman not worth painting; if he would be so kind as to paint your picture instead of mine, I could have it with me when my boy was away."

"I'll paint both, Freddy," said my master, when I showed him the letter; "you'll take your picture home with you, and I'll paint your mother's when I'm there. An old woman, indeed! If she were eighty-seven, she is better worth an artist's time than half the ladies in Manchester, with their short necks and broad faces, and not a brushful of expression in three score of them. I hope you'll grow up to be a comfort to her, Freddy, and always take her advice, my boy; she won't give you a bad one. If my mother had been spared, I would have been a better man; but I'll paint her picture some day: she was not like the creatures one sees now." And he delivered a pretty long discourse on the decline of female beauty in Lancashire since his childhood, at the same time finishing the portrait of a town-councillor's wife, in a currant-colored satin and a yellow turban, feeding a canary bird, in what she called, for I

had the honor of hearing the lady give stage directions, her "droring-room."

Of course I wrote home his munificent intention, and Browne brought more thanks and blessings to my master. He had, indeed, as much work as heart could wish that season: but, as the heat increased, his sitters scattered away to the country, the painting-room became deserted, and one morning the canvas was stretched for my picture, when Robert Rose came in, looking as if all his good fortune had been found, and handed my master a letter, saying, not in his usual mutter, "Lucy's come, sir; the Fentons are all going down, and my uncle hopes you'll remember your promise; the strawberries are ripe, and there's capital fishing; but the letter will tell you all."

"Your uncle's very kind, Robert," said my master, smiling, as he read: "it's five and twenty years since I saw the old place, but my promise must be kept to Lucy; this is the only time I can spare in the whole year. Mr. Rose has been good enough to invite you too, Freddy; he is a relation of yours, you know; I may say your grand-uncle;" and he added, in an under tone, "you never saw such strawberries."

I considered myself above being tempted by strawberries, but I answered that Mr. Rose was extremely kind; and as a visit to the country was an event unparalleled in my experience, it was with no small pleasure that I heard my master say, "We will go down for a few days; your

picture will be painted when we come home, but Lucy's must be finished first—the ladies have always precedence."

"Certainly, sir," said I, with all the gallantry of sixteen.

My master wrote his acceptance and acknowledgments; Robert Rose posted them; but, poor fellow, he could not draw a straight line that evening. I also observed that a visit to Rosebank was a considerable business with the Fentons. There were great goings through the town to get up the young ladies' dresses. George got a grand sketch-book and an artist's complete outfit for the occasion. By the way, my master bought me a sketch-book too, and a new coat, for I had grown too tall for jackets: it was made like his own, in the height of the fashion, with broad skirts, bright brass buttons, and, in color, deep blue. Like the Roman youth when he first put on his toga, I felt the importance and responsibility of manhood buttoned round me with that coat.

Well, our preparations were all completed: the Fentons went in their own carriage; Robert Rose, by his own choice, travelled with my master and me in the Derby Express. What induced Mr. Fenton to select it for our conveyance I know not, unless it was to please his father, for he had taken strongly to that dutiful course of late; and the Express, or at least a vehicle of the same name, had been on the road for fifty years, and was the oldest stage coach between Derby and Manchester. What age

the horses and harness were I cannot state, but I know that we stopped at a great many country inns for change and glasses of ale, that we dined at the Cherry Tree, and arrived at the Golden Lion in Derby late at night, where Mr. Rose's gig had come to meet us at six in the evening; and its prudent conductor, finding we did not come, had gone calmly to bed, determined to rest till morning, and make us do likewise. Of course we followed his example. It was my first night at an inn. I felt as if making my debût in society, and stood in some awe of the waiter and chambermaid; but things passed off quietly; and as we sat at breakfast next morning there came in a grey-haired, respectable-looking man, dressed in livery, which might have been his own choosing but for the crest on the button, and that was a hand holding a full-blown rose. I cannot describe it in more heraldic terms.

"I am Mr. Rose's man, sir," said he, addressing my master; "we did not know that Master Robert was coming with you, and the gig won't hold three; if you please to wait I'll go home for the family coach, sir."

"Could not we walk, Freddy?" said Robert; "it's only five miles, and this is a noble morning."

"Do, boys," said Mr. Fenton; "exercise is good for young people."

So he started in the gig, taking our traps with him, and Robert and I set forth together.

We had grown considerable friends of late. I

had given him some private help in his drawing, for one less gifted in the way of learning anything it was never my fortune to meet. Indeed, he had confided to me that his uncle would send him to Cambridge "if he could only get up the Latin grammar and learn to write well," for which endeavours, it appeared, he was staying with the Fentons, being under the instruction of their minister's brother, "who gave lessons in very genteel families, and could bring anybody on." However backward in the world of books, Robert said he knew the country for forty miles round. He took me to Rosebank by a by-road. I forget its name, but it led through meadows and cornfields; it was shaded by tall trees, fenced in by thick green hedges, where birds sang and wild flowers grew; there were openings from which one could see long stretches of hill and dale, the smoke of farm-houses, and the spires of village churches: it was, as Robert said, a noble morning; the sun and sky looked as if a cloud would never more come over them; the world was clothed with the leaves and flowers of June; and I felt the air of the fresh wide country for the first time in my life. Robert told me the history of every house we passed. I believe he knew all the cows in the fields. We had also some chat about things more familiar to me: he told me that all the Fentons had gone down to Rosebank except the old man, because his uncle and old Fenton could never agree; that his uncle "hated nothing but the

French and the Dissenters; that all the family were high Tories, and he would be one; that the Roses had owned the property and built the house before the Norman Conquest; that not one of them ever was hanged, or anything of that sort; and that he was heir-at-law.

I was doing my best to compliment him on that subject—for there stood Robert's pride—when we came in sight of the house. Rosebank looked worthy of its name when I first saw it in that bright summer's day. A sort of dell sloping up from the banks of the Wye, which there ran clear and rippling in the sun, backed by a half circle of hills, some wooded to the top, with grassy slopes between; some stretching away in wild moorland ridges, and some towering up in high rocky peaks like the more noted summits of Derbyshire. The dell was covered with orchards, growing corn, and new-mown hay. Old-fashioned farm-houses rose among them. On the right, between one of the highest hills and the river, lay a village, or rather hamlet, with high gabled cottages, a Gothic church, and a windmill. On the left was an ancient abbey, roofless, but still standing high, and covered with ivy. In the centre stood Mr. Rose's mansion, built square and low, but in the castellated style; a genuine manor-house, with turrets on the roof, massive chimneys, arched windows, and an ample porch. Robert told me it had a moat in old times, but they filled it up after the civil war. Now broad beds of flowers grew under the windows;

a smooth lawn, planted with clumps of rose trees, sloped down almost to the river; and a gravel walk, bordered with box and laurel, led from an old but substantial bridge, built, as a tablet in the parapet set forth, "By Richard Rose, Esq., and some time Captain of her Majesty's ship Matchless, with gold he won in the Spanish Main, and given by him in the year of grace 1601, to the tenants of Rosebank and all peaceable wayfarers without toll or charge for ever." Behind the house lay a large garden and an orchard that seemed to have no end. All round lay meadows and corn-fields, with tall hedges and green lanes between. I heard the clamour of a distant rookery. People were making hay and milking cows in all the meadows; the place looked quaint and rustic, but pleasant and well to do; and I think there must have been more like it in this country when it was called "Merrie England."

"Is it not beautiful?" said Robert Rose, as I stood gazing from the height of the bridge; "I would give the wide world to be able to make a sketch of it for Lucy's album. George Fenton says he will try it;" and Robert strode on with a half sigh.

We found the house almost deserted. The Fentons had arrived safe, so had my master, but every body had scattered away. A maid that sat knitting in the porch told us that Mrs. Fenton and the young ladies had gone with the housekeeper to her preserving-room; the gentlemen, she thought,

were all on the bowling-green; and where Miss Lucy was she could not say. Robert immediately showed me all the curiosities of the mansion: the great hall paved with black marble and hung with family pictures, the arms and pedigree of all the Roses carved on its mantel-piece; the kitchen, with its vaulted stone roof, which was the oldest part, and contained a jack whereon a bullock had been roasted at the Restoration; a silver cup won by his great grandfather's horse on some ancient Derby-day; a suit of armour, in which some of the Roses had fought at Bosworth Field; and a secret staircase behind one of the window shutters in the oak parlour.

"We have everything here," said he, "that a fine old house should have, except a haunted room; and I don't miss that, for it proves there was never much harm done in it."

Duly impressed with the grandeur of Rosebank mansion, I brushed off the dust of the by-road in my own room—by-the-bye, it was in one of the turrets, and looked far away to the hills, commanding also a prospect of the orchard and garden. In the latter I saw my master walking up and down with a stout old gentleman, who seemed to be talking to him earnestly and kindly. As I looked out he caught sight of me, pointed me out at once to his companion, who shouted out in a strong clear voice, "Come down, young man, I'm waiting to be introduced."

I knew it was Mr. Rose, and made my way

through the now quiet house—where every door and window stood open, and nothing was to be heard but the summer wind—to where he stood in the garden walk, beside a great bed of full blown peonies. All the dell belonged to him, and had belonged to his ancestors; he was Lord of the Manor and Justice of the Peace, with full command of the village stocks and round-house; the farmers and cottagers of Rosebank were his tenants; the little living was in his gift, his family vault was under the church, and service never began till he or some representative of his house was in the family pew. In short, he was monarch of all he surveyed; but a more kindly, good-natured, hospitable man there was not in Derbyshire, nor one less troubled with his own power and importance. He was tall and rather stout, had an erect carriage, what is called a fresh color, and only a sprinkling of grey among his dark brown hair; yet the man was close on seventy.

"Welcome to Rosebank, Master Frederic," said he, shaking me by the hand before I could make my best bow; "a fine young fellow you are for sixteen, and a good boy, too, I'm sure; don't you say so, Mr. Fenton?"

My master corroborated his panegyric; asked me if Rosebank was not a beautiful place; and I perceived that its praises pleased the old gentleman as well as his nephew. I was never a great stickler for the literal verity; but it was no exaggeration then to say that Rosebank was the

loveliest spot I ever saw; and we went round the garden admiring its beauties, which consisted chiefly of an abundance of common flowers and vegetables, a grotto, an orangery, a fountain flowing from a lion's mouth, a statue which some people said "was the goddess Flora, and some Queen Elizabeth," the celebrated strawberries—I never did see their equals since—and a corner fenced by a hedge of box, which they said was Lucy's garden. I had peeped in just long enough to see that there was a profusion of roses and carnations, a little summer-house covered with the sweet pea, a large jessamine trained against the wall, and a tame tortoise sleeping in the sun. When I returned to my seniors they were deep in something not intended for my ear; it was, probably, about myself and family, for I caught the sound of Favoursham; and as the possibility of eavesdropping would have compromised my dignity, I opened a convenient gate and walked into the orchard. It was a noble one: the trees looked centuries old, yet there was no notion of decay among them; their great branches were bending with fruit; their trunks were massive and mossy; the summer grass and wild flowers grew thick at their roots; and I wandered on, admiring the wild beauty of the place, and wondering "what old Rose would do with all the apples," till I met George Fenton, sketch-book in hand. He bade me good morning, said he was glad we had come safe, and asked me in a careless way if I had seen

Lucy. Before I could answer, a large white spaniel came bounding through the trees, as if to meet somebody. I heard a light musical laugh, and a girl's voice saying, "Have you found me out? Down, Sport, down; you traitor, you have spilled my basket."

A step or two brought us in sight of the speaker. Hard by a stile leading to the meadows, the dog was fawning on a young girl dressed in white dimity, with a large basket of wild flowers, which he had upset, and they were showering down on all sides. In her endeavours to save the basket, her straw hat had fallen off, and a flow of curls like mingled gold and jet fell round the loveliest face that ever came between me and sunshine. Her age was about my own; and, though less than most of the girls I knew, she looked tall from being so straight and slender. Her form and features were moulded like those of a Greek statue, without angle or inequality. She had a clear brown complexion, deep violet eyes that reminded me of my mother's, and a rosy flush covered her face as she stood, still laughing, with one hand on the dog's head and the other holding the basket.

"Where have you been, Lucy?" said George, in a half-displeased tone.

"In the meadows gathering these flowers," said she. "I wanted them to wreath grandpapa's picture; and Sport has spilled them all: come and help me to gather them up."

There had been a bow practised at the looking-

glass in my own little room for the first introduction to Miss Lucy Rose; but now I made a very awkward one, could not find a word to say, and fell to gathering up the flowers.

"What's the use of putting those things round grandpapa's picture?" said George. "There are better flowers in the garden, I am sure; and some of the cherries getting ripe up yonder would be more to his mind if they were pulled and put in the china basket: however, I'll help to gather them if you like."

"Oh no, Mr. Fenton," said Lucy, standing like a little Queen, "I should be sorry to waste your valuable time on such trifles; here is a gentleman who will help me; I am much obliged to you, sir: will you please to tell me your name?" she continued, lowering the basket as I put in two mighty handfuls.

"I am Frederic Favoursham—Mr. Fenton's boy, ma'am," said I, in great confusion.

"And I am Lucy Rose," said she, holding out her hand—how small and white it was! "I am glad to see you; my cousin Robert has told me so many good things about you."

I shook hands with my heart in the business, said something about being very much obliged, and gathered on.

Reader, perhaps you are not a believer in love at first sight. The doctrine has few disciples in England, and you and I cannot argue; but I know that there was then opened in my life a

spring which never closed again, though it turned to bitter waters. I have lived to grow a respectable man, with a great deal of good sense and some money; but when I go up from the dulness of the present, having learned, like most unsatisfied people, to retire at times into the imagination, the years flow backward to that summer morning, and my world is new once more. Death has taken nothing of mine, life has broken no promises: the sorrow has not fallen, the change has not come,—but there she stands, beautiful and young and light of heart, among the orchard trees, and I am still the untried, undisappointed boy gathering up the wild flowers at her feet.

I saw George climbing up the cherry-tree: he had walked away whistling, and though he had been kind to me, I could have stoned him down with great pleasure for behaving so to Lucy. She glanced up stealthily once or twice, and there was a sad look in her eyes; but then she seemed to think no more about it. We refilled the basket, and brought it home in great triumph, tied on Sport's back with a string I had in my pocket. He was Lucy's dog, and Lucy and I were becoming great friends. I had found my tongue, and told her all about my mother in Liverpool; how my master was to paint her picture and mine, how we were going together to see her, that I was learning to be an artist, and Mr. Fenton said I would come to something. The latter intelligence was given with a very red

face, but Lucy said, "Mr. Fenton knew better than most people, and no doubt it would prove true." She also told me it was grandpapa's birthday, and she "wanted to wreath his picture with meadow flowers, as her mother used to do with people's pictures on their birthdays; that there was to be tea, dancing, and supper in the evening; that the tenants were to be entertained on the lawn, and friends in the great parlour, for that was always the custom at Rosebank.

Robert Rose met us at the door. I saw his dull eyes glisten as Lucy came near, and he seemed pleased that I was with her. She did not speak of George's behaviour to him or any one else; but he was out of favor with her all the evening; and when he brought in his cherries it was a satisfaction to me that he had got very few, and everybody said they were sour. We wreathed grandpapa's picture together. It was one of Opie's portraits, had been painted when my master was his pupil, and represented Mr. Rose in the uniform of the Derbyshire Volunteers, of which distinguished corps he had been a captain. The heavily gilt frame, twined and covered with those simple flowers, seemed to my thinking the finest thing in the great parlour, which really was a noble room, some forty feet square, ceiled, wainscoted, floored, and furnished with dark polished oak, relieved by large mirrors and hangings of light green damask. All the family feasts had been held there, from the destruction

of the Spanish Armada. So Robert informed me, as he stood trying to help us, spoiling everything he put his hand to, and admiring all that Lucy did.

I suppose the sheep-shearings and harvest-homes of which Thomson and Bloomfield sing must have been something like the evening celebration of Mr. Rose's birthday. The whole household was busy preparing for it: the Fenton ladies, being great in the housekeeping line, did wonders in superintending, and seemed to enjoy a bustle for once in their lives. Mr. Rose and my master acted as general overseers; Robert, George, and myself helped to fetch and carry. By five in the afternoon the humbler tenants came in their best attire "to wish his honour many happy birthdays," and fill the long tables set under the rose-trees on the lawn. The great parlour was crowded with gentry, who came from parks and halls many a mile off, mounted on hunters or packed in family coaches, with a goodly sprinkling of first-class farmers and their wives—not the least fine or proud of the company. Mr. Rose welcomed them all, and responded to their congratulations with a heartiness which everybody believed in. He was assisted, and the work required some help, by my master, who did duty for his uncle, as for his Manchester relations; and I sincerely admired the dignity and importance which was rapidly gathering round him. There was feasting without and feasting within;

there was all manner of country good things, and great consumption. When tea, as they pleased to call it, was over, the parlour went out to the lawn. Mr. Rose made them all a speech to the effect that he was glad to see them; that they were all friends and neighbours; that he had lived sixty-eight years among them and never found an enemy; that he hoped they were all good subjects of the King and the constitution; and he wished they would enjoy themselves. There was great applause when the worthy squire concluded. Tom Ash, his steward, bailiff, and general manager, who stood behind me, and had probably found the beer strong, "took the liberty of enquiring if the young gentlemen had ever heard such speaking in Manchester?" and from the remarks around I learned that Mr. Rose was not only the landlord, but the orator and statesman, of Rosebank.

He reigned in right patriarchal fashion, that last of his line, perhaps of his order, for I think the homely hospitable squirehood is extinct in England. It may be no great loss to the country; but Mr. Rose has left so fair a picture of local absolutism in my boyish recollection that I sometimes imagine Arcadia must have had such landlords. I have heard him say that he hunted and sported more than was good for him in his youth, but he had never chased fox or hare since the death of Lucy's grandmother, which happened thirty years before I knew him.

Being a staunch Tory he supported the game-laws, but thought "it was beneath a gentleman to prosecute for rabbits." No well-doing tenant's rent had ever been raised on his estate; no back-going family had ever been ejected. Though armed with the powers of the stocks and round house, the Squire was slow to punish what he called "poor devils;" and when an example of evil-doers had to be made, Tom Ash had private orders to release and conduct the offender beyond his frontier, with an intimation "not to come back in a hurry, for his Honor was a terrible man."

Everybody said old Rose was greatly imposed on, but the parish had few burdens from his property. He lived without law-suits, without debt, and without fear. A great bone-contractor bought the estate twenty years ago, pulled down most of the cottages, turned the farms into grazing ground, sells the orchard-apples by the ton, and has an action for poaching at every assize.

Let me return to the birthday festivities. There was universal dancing. Mr. Rose led out Mrs. Fenton, he said to set a good example; my master danced with three widows in the course of the evening. There was a deal of country finery and rosy faces, but none of them all looked like Lucy in her muslin robe and wreath of the meadow flowers left from her grandfather's picture. Oh, but the old man was fond and proud of her, and everybody about the place had something good to tell of the young girl's doings. She had been

kind to some in their sickness; she had helped others in their want, or interceded for them with her grandfather when their misdeeds had provoked him. I saw that she did not do much in the bustle of preparation. Lucy was more tasteful than notable, and never was intended for a managing woman; but she danced on the lawn, played and sang in the parlour; and if there was anybody in either sphere left in the background—and such things will be in all companies—Lucy paid attention to them. I know it was that made her find me out, where I sat in a corner, rather crest-fallen, though determined not to show it, because, having never learned to dance, I could not figure off with the gentry; and pride, of which I had a good stock in those days, forbade me to consociate with the rustics on the green.

"Why haven't you asked me to dance, Frederic?" said Lucy, coming behind and laying her white hand on my shoulder; "I have been waiting for you all the evening."

"I am very sorry, Miss Rose," said I, blushing for the fact; "but I never learned any dance except an Irish jig from my mother."

"An Irish jig," said she; "oh, that's delightful; you must let us see it, and teach me."

It was a great effort; but after some persuasion from Lucy, I screwed up my courage: danced my mother's jig with unbounded applause—first in the parlour, and afterwards on the green. I taught Lucy too: it was easy work, for dancing came

naturally to her; and all the young ladies wanted to learn it after supper. In short, I felt that some distinction had been gained when the celebrations of Mr. Rose's birthday came to a close: the tenantry going off with cheers for his Honor and everybody about Rosebank; the gentry galloping away with laughter and kind good-nights; and a gipsy band, who encamped in the woods every summer, being allowed to tell fortunes and bound to steal nothing, coming when all was quiet to carry away the remnants as their appointed portion.

Next day my master began Lucy's picture: he wished to paint her in the dress she had worn the evening before; the proposal met with universal approbation, and the first sitting came off in the library—Robert Rose stationed behind her chair, I doing my duty to the colors, and George Fenton —she had forgiven him by that time, and wore a brier-rose he brought her—looking on and sketching by turns; while the old gentleman sat talking of her likeness to the deceased Mrs. Rose, whose picture hung beside his own in the great parlour, and I thought had a much stronger resemblance to my aunt Grizzle. My master did not finish that portrait in haste. Lucy would not sit, Mr. Rose would not let him work too long, and the few days he had allowed himself lengthened out wonderfully. He had always been a favourite with the old gentleman: next to Robert and Lucy, he was his nearest relation; and their old intimacy

seemed to recover suddenly from the effects of a long separation: they talked much together, and went everywhere except to the Derby Road, which Robert Rose showed me early one morning, with great secrecy, pointing out the spot where his young cousin had been killed; and assuring me, with many warnings not to repeat it, that it was his belief "Harry had never been himself since." In the following week Mrs. William Fenton arrived with all her boys and satins; and it was a triumph over the toils and cares of life to see how she enjoyed herself at Rosebank. The easy-going lady was very popular; the young masters got puddings and pies to their heart's content; and were tolerable on the whole, though I know that Mr. Rose gave them a quiet word about being saucy to the servants. The "dreadful drudge" remained at home as a matter of course. Indeed, our party at Rosebank had got rid of all the hard workers and reckoners among them. It was a merry Midsummer, and passed like all pleasant times, with little to record or remember. There were picnics and excursions, boating parties on the river, and visits to the neighbouring mansions, of whose brave and fair inhabitants I can only recollect an old gentleman who swore prodigiously, three maiden sisters who had been educated by Mrs. Hannah More, a young lady in yellow who was thought sentimental, and sang "Crazy Jane," and a gay though wrinkled widow, with hall and land at her own disposal,

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of their own age in that light. I did not know that then; and felt myself growing not only a man but a sort of hero. The porch parlour was my lady's bower. I was a true knight in the service of a peerless beauty: the old ballads I read had not been thrown away on me; and I more than once caught myself wishing we could meet a mad bull, or something of the kind, in our excursions, that my prowess might be proved in Lucy's defence.

CHAPTER VI.

Thou canst not see the broad and mighty river
In the small streamlet sent from mountain springs;
So, from their poor and puny sources, never
Can mortals guess the wondrous course of things:
Yet still the self-same flax the Fates are spinning,
And the great end flows from the small beginning.
—*Sir Jasper's Rhymes.*

Mr. Harry Fenton's friends and connoisseurs have agreed "that the portrait of Miss Lucy Rose is one of the best of his paintings." George bought it at the sale of the Rosebank furniture. I bought it at the sale of his, and somebody will, doubtless, buy it at the sale of mine. It represents Lucy as she looked then, standing under a rose tree on the lawn—the feast, the house, and the country beyond seen in the background; and over all lies the lovely light of the summer evening. Perhaps the genius of the place assisted the artist, or his performance was happy because the time was so, I know not. But the picture was finished after weeks of sittings, and exhibited to friends, neighbours, and tenants, who "came to see the picture of Miss Lucy," and all the criticism I heard was praise.

"I'll paint you now, Frederic," said my master, as he came suddenly into the great parlour and

found me standing before the newly finished portrait, for I had risen early that morning, and thought there was nobody astir but myself. "Keep that attitude, my boy," he continued, catching up his pencil and a piece of drawing board; "you never looked so well worth painting. I'll make a sketch of you now, and paint it off when we go home in a style that will charm your mother."

My picture was to be painted after Lucy's: was that an omen?—oh, the dreams of youth! I stood without moving a hair; but in less than fifteen minutes Mr. Fenton had a miniature half-length of me on the board, which all who saw it pronounced a most striking likeness. The painter was so pleased with it that he colored and set it in a small frame; and I may as well mention that it was the only portrait of me or mine on which his pencil was ever employed; that it remained for twenty years an ornament to the back parlour in Liverpool, and then my aunt Grizzle bequeathed it to me in her will.

In the meantime the first tinge of yellow was coming on the corn. We saw the twilight shortening as we sat in the porch, and Lucy said the nightingales were going away. Mrs. Fenton, senior, and family, received orders to march homewards. Mrs. Fenton, junior, thought she "must really go back to poor William." Johnson, who never left his post, wrote to say that a great many callers were coming, and there were some letters,

but none that had "haste" on them. I had got deep in that first romance of mine—nobody guessed how the case stood—I would have gone to the stake to keep that secret—but it sharpened my eyes and ears for all matters of the kind, and I could not help observing that Miss Fenton, otherwise Sarah Jane, had some concern on her spirit. There was a poor boy whom the servants called "Innocent," and Mr. Rose said "Providence had not given him the full complement of common sense;" but he was honest and civil, and the son of a poor widow in Derby, so he employed him to carry letters to and from the post-office. I had seen Sarah Jane give that innocent boy something very like silver, and take a letter from him one morning at the garden gate. Afterwards I observed her looking impatiently for his coming, and slipping out as it were to meet the messenger. Moreover, I more than once perceived that she took letters from her pocket in quiet corners of the grounds and read them to herself—sometimes smiling and sometimes frowning, but I always thought the lady's airs of authority seemed to increase after that perusal. Who was the swain I could not discover: the letters came every day, and always by the same hand. The orderly family knew nothing about it; but a circumstance more interesting turned my attention from that subject.

Lucy and I were working one day in the garden —we often did so in a quiet afternoon—some sticks were wanted to train up sweet peas, I think, and

we went to get them in the meadow lane. I was breaking the withered boughs from an old tree there, and Lucy sitting on the grass below, when a man, dressed exactly like one of the gipsies, looked over the hedge, made a slight bow, and spoke to her, in what I then knew to be French only by the sound. To my surprise Lucy answered him as if the language had been her mother tongue, shook hands with him over the hedge, and they talked like old friends; but that was not all. I had seen the man before: in spite of the gipsy dress and foreign tongue his face was known to my memory, and when he smiled I knew it was Lavance. At me he never looked but once, when Lucy appeared to be telling him something about me; then it was like a perfect stranger, and I would have spoken, but it struck me that he might not wish to be known in that trim. What was he saying to Lucy? and why did he look at her so earnestly? What had happened to him? and what was he? I would have given anything to know; but they talked on for some minutes, then Lucy shook hands with him; he went up the lane, over the meadows, and away into the wood. I gathered up my sticks and followed Lucy back to the garden, not knowing how and where to begin, my mind was so full of questions, and I stood in such reverence of her ladyship. At length, however, I took courage, when all the sweet peas were trained up, and said, "Miss Rose, is that gentleman a gipsy?"

"I do not think he is," said Lucy, laughing; but she added, looking more serious, "I do not know. He comes here now and then, and has brought me many presents. It was he who gave me the crystal box and the purple vase, which you said looked so beautiful in my parlour; but he will never come in, let us ask him ever so much. One Christmas time, when the snow was deep, he came to the porch and gave me a german-tree, all hung with little lamps and toys, for I was then a child; grandpapa wanted him to come and dine with us, and went out to ask him, but he would not, and I think grandpapa was angry, for he never asked him again. It is very strange, but I like to see him, because he speaks French to me, which nobody here does, you know."

"Oh Lucy," said I, "Miss Rose, I mean ——"

"Call me Lucy, Frederic dear," she said, "we are relations."

"Well, Lucy," said I, getting as bold as brass, "how did you learn to speak French so well?"

"From my mother," said Lucy; "did you not know it was her tongue: she talked nothing else to me, and I say my prayers in it yet. The books I keep behind the green curtain in my parlour are all hers. That is her picture you see above the mantel-piece;—was not she beautiful?—and good, too," said Lucy, growing warm; "and grandpapa and all his friends think my mother a sort of a shame, though they have nothing to

say against her but that she was poor, and not English."

I was conscious of standing rigid as marble over the last of the sweet pea, with mouth and eyes wide open while Lucy finished; but she laid her fingers on my arm and added, with something like tears in her eyes, "Don't say a word about it, Frederic dear, for grandpapa has been very kind; he took me home when I was a little girl, and left an orphan; he has been good to me ever since, and put a nice tombstone over my mother."

"Lucy," said I, "I'll never say a word that you don't like; I wish I could speak French, too; but I'll learn, Lucy, that and everything."

"I know you will, Frederic," she said, "and come to be a painter or great man in some profession."

It was strange, but from these simple words the sense of my own deficiencies fell on me like a thunderbolt. I had spent my time grinding colors and reading old books. I had no learning but part of the Latin grammar which my master had taught me in his leisure hours, and in spite of his good-natured prophecies, I had an inward conviction, which time has verified, that I was not born for the artist vocation. For the second time it came upon me that I was making no way in the world, but now the thought had a heavier weight, and somehow there came with it the full perception that Lucy Rose was an heiress, that most of her relations were rich, and that every-

body despised poor young men without income or position. Were not these terrible reflections for the sixteenth summer?

Lavance puzzled me also. What brought him about Lucy in that queer disguise? She evidently knew little of him, except that he was no gipsy, and that he would not come in. I had seen him dressed like a gentleman and lending money to my master. He had been expected for months in the painting room,—myself had looked for his coming as that of a friend; yet from the day of his appearance in the meadow lane, I will not say that the green-eyed monster took possession of me, but that Lavance was virtually placed under surveillance, and I watched over his movements—that is, when I could see or hear of them—with a keen though indefinite suspicion. However, there was no further opportunity afforded me on that visit. A day or two after the incident recorded, my master got a letter one morning, which he read to himself, looked rather disconcerted, and said he must go home, for the Misses Rollinson wanted their portraits. Home we went accordingly, with all sorts of adjurations from Mr. Rose "to come back for the partridges, or at farthest at Christmas," with half the flowers and vegetables Rosebank could spare packed in and about the family coach in which we travelled to Derby, and a promised stipend of green geese, etc., to be forwarded in their season. I know there was half a quarrel, too, because my master would not be

paid for Lucy's picture, and my own woe was great because I could not make a sketch of Rosebank to leave in her album. I had tried it nineteen times and failed, though George Fenton finished one on the second trial, which my master called "a very respectable attempt," and I think that term fully described the entire performances of his life. I cut Lucy's name, however, on an old tree in the meadow under which she had a seat, with a Latin verse below,—it was from Virgil, I think, in praise of somebody's beauty. I had picked up the words in translation, which of course I made known, whereupon Lucy admired my learning, and gave me two book-marks, with "Souvenir" and "Friendship" worked on them—not by her own fair hands, for the lady of my thoughts was no accomplished needlewoman, though she had been educated at an old-fashioned school in Bristol, where nothing was professed but "the usual branches of reading, writing, English grammar, fancy work, music, dancing, and deportment." The latter, Lucy had no need to learn, being taught by nature, the only true teacher of the graces. How far she profited by the other studies of that primitive school I cannot tell. There was a sampler of hers hanging in the breakfast parlour, beside the Ten Commandments done in double cross-stitch by her paternal grandmother, and I understood Mr. Rose regarded them as equal monuments of art. She had read a deal of poetry and a few old novels; but riding on

Speed, playing with Sport, working in her garden and rambling through the woods and meadows, occupied most of her time. I have heard Mrs. Fenton, senior, "fear that Mr. Rose was not bringing up his grand-daughter in the knowledge of domestic duties." I have heard her daughters, in the might of their Manchester wisdom, aver "that Lucy Rose was just a country girl with neither style nor cleverness about her;" and I have heard the eldest Miss Rollinson testify "that though beauty was but the outside of the cup and platter which serious people never thought of, she wondered anybody could call that little girl at Rosebank pretty."

All these comments came in due season. Meantime, Mr. Fenton and his boy went home, accompanied by Robert Rose, who had still to be "brought on" by the minister's brother. Mrs. William and her boys had departed for some time, to the immense relief of the cherries. George had gone with his mother and sisters the week before, leaving his sketch in Lucy's album, but I felt sure nobody missed him. It occurred to me, however, that old Rose must have said something not at all to my master's liking in the half-quarrel already mentioned, for all the way he was silent and thoughtful. More than once I saw him looking earnestly at me, and took terror that my great secret had come out; but he said nothing.

All was right in the painting-room. Johnson, with his wonted punctuality, delivered the news

and messages. "Dr. Locock had been calling, and was glad to find my master set up again. Mr. Fenton, his father, had been two or three times to hope he was coming home to his work; and the ladies at Oak Park had sent word that if he pleased they would begin their sittings to-morrow."

Johnson's countenance took a remarkable expression of more knowledge than comfort when he added that Mr. Lavance had called that morning, and pointed out the gentleman's card.

"Dear me," said my master, "could not he have stayed?"

"No, sir," said Johnson, looking still more serious, "he said he had business in London, but would soon come north again to begin his studies with you."

While my ears were drinking in this intelligence, my master had turned over the cards and letters and hastily opened one of the latter, on which I saw my uncle Gurney's handwriting. He read it quickly, and, with a relieved look, said to me, "Freddy, your mother has been rather unwell, but your uncle says she is better; you must go and see her, my boy. As the Misses Rollinson will sit to-morrow I cannot go with you, nor paint the pictures just now; but you'll take that nice little sketch with you,—I am sure your mother will like it; and you may stay with her a fortnight."

I was delighted with all I should have to tell

and exhibit. Would not Old Bridge Street be astonished? Would not I have a triumph over the Whittles, my aunt, my uncle, and my cousin Ned, for Dick had not yet been found; and my mother—"she had been rather unwell," but was better! I had heard of her sickness before, and was not frightened now. I packed up my best clothes, gathered all my sketches, especially all those Mr. Fenton had touched up, bought the fast-colored chintz, a frill of Brussels lace, and a bunch of cap ribbons, investing therein all my savings. My master charged himself with the duty of sending tribute to my aunt and uncle; I think it consisted chiefly of silk handkerchiefs; so, with my picture, and all my other testimonials of success, I started, by what was called the nine o'clock coach, next morning. The day was warm and wet all out, as it can rain in the North towards the middle of August. Robert Rose "saw me off," for the Misses Rollinson were sitting full two hours before, and his last act was to put into my hand a handsome new umbrella, with "Freddy, give that to your mother from me. One of the Roses of Rosebank," he added, by way of instruction, as the coach started.

It was full of wet men, who went out and came in again at every stage, and said "the crops would be worth nothing if this lasted." I know the weight of such weather now, but did not mind it then. All the way I was gathering my wonders to tell, and settling in my own mind whether or

her many a time, when she wrote and wished it, had I been half so earnest as herself. It is a sad business that late reckoning, which strikes the true balance when all is over, and the duty can never be done; scattering away the excuses we make to ourselves of business, safety, or propriety; and taxing our memories for evermore with the right overstepped and the love forgotten. That was my case—nobody knew it, nobody blamed me. Perhaps it was in the order of things: every generation practically slights its elders, and time clears scores with us all. I was careless in coming to cheer the heart that loved me, and its place in my life remains a perpetual vacancy. I have made merry, I have made love, I have worked and lived and quarrelled with people; but I never had a friend since I lost my mother.

My aunt Grizzle, when relating this portion of family history, on which she grew rather prolix, after money came to the house, used to say "that Frederic bore up wonderfully, but he could not be expected to miss the poor woman much." I cannot verify the statement; but I know the mist cleared from my mind; that things began to look as they had done, for I was young, and had a future; but henceforth life was never what it had been—the shadow of death had passed over it—my memory had a link to the grave and a part with the dead. I went back to Mr. Fenton; the old house had become too dreary to live in; and I count it one among his many kindnesses that he never condoled

with me in my mourning, nor said a single word but, "Freddy, my boy, you're welcome back;" and there were tears in the good man's eyes.

The sittings of the Misses Rollinson were not concluded, and none of his drawing-class had come back but Robert Rose, who sat drawing away at the very same copy of curved lines which my master had set him when he first became a pupil. Robert had learned the state of the case; and when I put into his hand the umbrella, which I had kept out of my aunt's clutches, and brought back religiously, as a present meant for the dead, he first bade me "not to grieve, for my mother was gone to heaven," and then bent over me and cried more than I did. There was less of gifts than graces bestowed on that last of the Roses. I know he gave the umbrella to a poor market woman from whom he used to buy water-cresses, with strict injunctions never to let me see it. He and I had been always friendly, but we drew closer ever after; and if our companionship was short, it was also fortunate, for a single misunderstanding never came between us.

I had taken such a horror of Old Bridge Street and its inhabitants as made me wish never to see the place again, and brought the last of my worldly possessions, and the most valued too, my poor mother's bequest, with me to the painting-room. It consisted chiefly of the few books and trinkets she had brought from her early home in the west of Ireland, including the "Prophecies of St.

Collum," "The History of St. Bridget," and the "Lives of noted Raparees;" a silk handkerchief with a border of shamrocks—it had been a present from my father—her rosary, a braid of her long hair with the grey growing through its shining brown, and the last of all her knitting packed up in a little box for me. There was a long letter too, which bore no date, which seemed to have been written under the presentiment of death, and began with—

"Dear Freddy, do not grieve, but put your trust in God when I am dead and gone. I think the Catholic religion the oldest and the best, because I was brought up in it; but your uncle and aunt brought you up a Protestant, for which some people have blamed me; yet I think, and Father Anthony says I am right in it, that if you are a good boy all the week it matters little to what church you go on Sunday, only it would be better if you took to the true old faith. I am sorry I have no money to leave you, but it was the will of God that I was never to get any, and your father did not do as well as he might have done; his rich friends thought less of him for marrying me, and my people cast me off for running away with a Protestant soldier, which was but natural: you will hear that he has taken another wife in America; but, dear Freddy, never forget he is your father, and do not let him want in his old days. It was bad company led him astray: keep well out of it, my own son. If you come to wealth

and greatness, as I sometimes think you will, don't set your heart on riches, for men must leave them; and if money keeps scarce with you, don't repine at poverty, for the King of Glory was born among the poor. If you marry, be a good man to your wife, for women have a poor turn in this world; and if you don't, live like the holy virgins, that will come in white to the gates of heaven."

So my mother's last letter went on with blessings and advices that were too good for her son. Its spelling is not quite so perfect as a scholar could wish, and its style is not very coherent; but when neither good books nor sermons would do for me, I have read over the three sheets written in large copy hand, and thought myself the better for it.

It is true that "the absent are the dead"—lost to our sight and daily converse; time and we go on without them, and their passing away leaves no chasm in the circle round us. It may be an instinctive knowledge of this which makes the sorrow of first partings so sore. I had lived so long away from my mother, in the growing time of life, when impressions are formed quickly, that as the painting-room received me once more with its wonted comers and usages, I scarce felt that I had lost her. At times the thought that she was lying in the old churchyard, would strike me to the heart like cold steel. I got used to that too; and time brought to an end that stream of talk, queries, and condolence, which poor people's

troubles bring on them from all who are deemed their betters. Old Rollinson delivered a sermon on the occasion, and shut his eyes, till I am sure he imagined himself preaching to my cousins again in the back parlour. Mrs. Fenton "hoped I knew my duty." Miss Fenton, whose airs of authority and admonition were greatly on the increase, gave me a considerable lecture, and a tract called "The Vale of Tears." Mr. Temple—he always went about with them now—asked me all the questions I would answer on the subject. I think Mrs. William said "she was deeply distressed for me;" George told me "he was sorry to hear it;" and old Fenton remarked "that it could not injure my prospects any way."

CHAPTER VII.

They played the game of life there in the fashion
Most favoured since the world's Arcadian time
Whose date is known to poets: there was interest
Much followed and yet little understood—
And there was duty done right niggardly
With many forms of words that passed for faith—
And there those ancient untamed forces known
By evil names made war upon them all;
Yet it were hard to say which wrought most ruin.
—*Count Ernest's Play.*

BARRY, the poor man and great artist, exhibited one shred of worldly wisdom when he requested the kindly Duchess, who asked what she could do to serve him, to appear with her coach and six in the narrow street where he lodged. It is surprising what the most casual notice of a magnate can do for the minors of any circle. I rose a step in my master's esteem when Mr. Rose sent me a kind letter, saying "he was very sorry to hear of my great loss, but I should never want a friend while he lived." Lucy sent me a black watch ribbon, which I had not much use for then, and some flowers from the great jessamine in her garden, which I kept for many a summer; but notice still more influential came at the same time.

Mr. Rollinson had never regarded me with favor or friendship; he visited on the child the

good fortune which the father had thrown away. Whether time had softened in his sight the blackness of that iniquity, or whether he wanted somebody for preaching to, I cannot tell, but after the delivery of the aforesaid sermon, he called often to give me good advices, presented me with a Bible and a black cravat; and when the young ladies' portraits were finished, formally included me in the invitation to see them hung, and dine at Oak Park. That was a day of great solemnity with me and my master. The carriage was sent for us, which, by the way, had never been done before; and I know that Mr. Fenton prepared himself, that being a leisure forenoon, by reading several chapters of the life of Mrs. Doreathy Pye, wife of the Rev. Spooner Pye, Independent Missionary in the kingdom of Siam, which I understood was the newest and most interesting work known to the Rollinson circle that season. The house, as I had often observed in my distant views of it, was large, and built in no style that I can name. They said it belonged to Queen Anne's time, and had been erected on the site of an older mansion, which, indeed, the park verified—most of its trees were old and stately, and its turf had the mossy thickness of centuries. Within it was richly and heavily furnished; there was an evident leaning to Honduras mahogany and West Indian goods of all kinds. The servants were numerous, grave, and quiet. We did not see the lady of the mansion, and no remark was made upon her absence;

but the eldest Miss Rollinson presided, and I observed that the moon looked round and bright when we were going home.

The table was spread with all sorts of good things. The young ladies and the old gentleman looked as they always did: by the way, he shut his eyes when saying grace, and it was not a short one; but there sat on his right an important member of the family, to whom I was introduced for the first time, Master Richard Mackenzie Rollinson, his only son, and heir of Oak Park with all its dependencies. I never knew the age of that boy. He had flax-colored hair, an ashy pale complexion, and a considerable curvature of the spine, which, together with an expression of uncommon gravity, and no trace of childhood in tone or manner, made him look exactly like a dwarfish old man. He sat with great composure, and an evident sense of his own importance, on a high chair, so constructed as to bring him to the level of the company. He spoke only to my master and Mr. Rollinson: it was all about sermons or books I had never heard of; and when the cloth was removed, he gave thanks very loud and much longer than his father. I will confess that I stood in some awe of that young gentleman, which no doubt qualified me for the office I was afterwards to fill in his establishment. For the present he took no notice of me whatever except to inquire if I had read "The Whole Duty of Man," and give an admonishing look when I was drinking beer,

to which it appeared he had a special objection. In short, I felt relieved in no common degree when about an hour after dinner he rubbed his head, said he wanted Sally, and an elderly respectable looking woman, who acted as his body servant, was summoned to put Master Richard to bed.

The young ladies talked of nothing but Mrs. Doreathy Pye and their portraits. Thanks to his forenoon study, my master was at home on both subjects. He had been invited only to approve of the hanging, which, like everything else in the house, had been managed by Mr. Rollinson; and the three were suspended opposite the dining-room windows. All the sisters were plain, and the artist had not flattered them much, so the portraits were very good likenesses, and every one had a book in her hand uncommonly like Mrs. Doreathy. Time seemed very scarce with them—I mean the originals—every half-hour they looked at their watches and reminded each other of the necessity of getting up early to attend the Bible Class. Immediately after dinner we all adjourned to the drawing-room —how coldly grand it looked that summer evening —then we had coffee, Mr. Rollinson preached me a sermon on the duty of resignation, and my master and I were sent home in the carriage.

I must have listened to the old gentleman with patience and propriety, for after that he became my acknowledged patron. I was always invited with my master to Oak Park, and consequently grew in favor with all the Fenton family. My

master was already great among his kindred, and the bonds of their affection seemed to tighten round him every day. As the summer waned his sitters became numerous, his drawing-class reformed, and it was a settled custom that we should spend every Sunday and Thursday evening at the house of the senior Mr. Fenton. My master and I went often to chapel with the family; and had that state of things continued, I am sure we should have become zealous dissenters by way of pleasing the old king of Hanover Street. Between his gracious remarks on the uselessness of Harry's trade and the necessity of attending to all his humours, my master had sometimes hard work to do; yet I could not help thinking that the old man was not the greatest visitation in the house. Its inmates lived under a degree of order and good government which was dreadful to contemplate. Had there not been something of the machine in all their compositions, they could not have endured it; aud if clockwork was not the chief ingredient in Mrs. Fenton's nature, I cannot imagine what was. Nothing was permitted to be out of place, nobody was allowed to be out of time; there was no change in the household ceremonial from Midsummer to Christmas. They had no visitors but the Baptist minister, Mr. Read, and his brother who brought everybody on, Mr. Temple, who now read to them the *Watchman* and the *Record* (for they took in those pious papers), young ladies who

worked for the missionary-box, and old ones who brought tracts in their pockets. It might have been the Irish blood bequeathed me by my mother, but often in our sober evenings I have secretly wished that somebody would break the windows or smash the old china, to interrupt their deadly regularity.

I know it weighed heavily on my master; his respectability had not made him a blither man. In the midst of it he looked sadly bored, and at times rather cowed too; moreover he was much longer out of spirits and out of humour than I had known him when he was Mr. Gerber, with daily recourse to the house at the corner and the stormy converse of Mrs. Sutherland. She was not so much as named among us; Mary Ann had more than once come for the loan of something, with an assurance that her mistress was dangerously ill, whereon Mr. Fenton went in great privacy to see her, and said "Pooh, pooh," when he came home. One comfort he had, however, and so had I: that was, visiting Mrs. William.

Notwithstanding her boys—who were, to do them every justice, the most disagreeably selfish little Britons with whom I have had the misfortune to be acquainted—the lady kept such a free-and-easy house, and was so independent of time, care, and economy, that her dominion was a perfect refreshment after that of dear "good orderly Mrs. Fenton," as she used to call her step mother-in-law. We were always welcome there,

and I am grateful for my share of the welcome yet. The house was never without company; there were small tea parties, small dancing parties, and now and then a dashing dinner, when the "dreadful drudge" could come home to it. My master told me afterwards, in our last days of confidence, that William had married her without a farthing, and much to the displeasure of his father, though that offended monarch had been reconciled by subsequent steadiness and humility: that she had been one of nine daughters pertaining to a worthy bookseller, who could scarcely keep his head above water; "but," Mr. Fenton added, "they had always a genteel turn." Probably that bent in the right direction contributed to the good matches which, according to his account, the whole nine achieved; but of all their prizes in the matrimonial lottery, I recollect only that the eldest married the great Dr. Dilworth, who kept the Dilworth Institution at Reading.

The small gaieties at Mrs. William's were supposed, by one of those fictions prevalent in all respectable society, to be unknown to Mr. Fenton, senior: he could not approve of such doings; but Mrs. William was beyond the pale of his hereditary dominions, and perhaps the old gentleman knew she had a will of her own. At all events, it was an understood matter that the goings-on in Charlotte Square were not to be talked of in his hearing. George seldom came to the little parties, Mrs. Fenton never; but the young ladies

occasionally appeared, and always brought their work with them, by way of protest against the sins of the house. Miss Fenton was the most frequent visitor. She was a shade less dull than her sisters, and the general drab color of the home-life may not have agreed with her so well: moreover she had become in a manner interesting to me from the little discovery I made at Rosebank. Whence came those carefully-concealed letters I had watched and wondered at without success in the finding-out line; till one evening when she was left alone doing a kettle-holder, I think, at a small table in a corner of Mrs. William's back drawing-room—all but myself and her being engaged in a game of cross-questions in the front division of that fashionable apartment—I was ensconced in an opposite corner, reading the *Literary Gazette*, which Mr. William took in because it was a genteel paper. There was a review of Miss Landon's Poems, which I read with many a wish that Lucy could see it, for she was the only person that I knew who cared for poetry, when a slight rustle made me peep over the page, and Miss Fenton was reading a letter. That very moment Mrs. William called to her from the front,

"Sarah Jane, you really must come and join us, we can't get on without you."

And she was coming for her, which Miss Fenton perceiving, thrust letter, kettle-holder, and all into her capacious work-basket, closed down the

lid, and hastened to the cross-questions with a wonderfully composed countenance. The temptation was too great for a boy of my composition. I should blush to write it, but truth obliges me to declare, in this compendium of my life and works, that I lost no time in getting hold of that letter. It began—

"Dearest, loveliest, most admired Miss Fenton, —You ask me what I mean by a life's devotion; but what words are more fitting to express the strength of that attachment which, in spite of the gulf fortune has fixed between us, makes me presume to hope ——"

The writing was not very plain, and my haste was urgent, but I glanced at the signature—it was

"Your humble and ever devoted,

"THOMAS TEMPLE."

Three seconds had not elapsed till the letter was safe under the kettle-holder, and I was at the *Literary Gazette*, apparently reading with unbroken attention, but actually thinking of the romance of real life I had just discovered.

Like other mighty monarchs of ancient and modern times, the old king of Hanover Street had plots and conspiracies around his throne of which he little dreamed. The sober, silent music-master, whose humble reverence for his patron was a caution to all beholders and had won him the favor of that ungracious Sovereign, whose usefulness as a man of all work had gained him a place in the household, was carrying on this vigorous siege of

the eldest Miss Fenton's heart. Well, her hair was very red, and she looked at times not at all what I would have taken for the "dearest, loveliest, and most admired of ladies." He had a high shoulder, a creaking voice, and a cold-blooded look in his keen black eyes, which did not accord with my idea of Pyramus or Leander; but I was at the age when one believes in the romantic, and sees it readily in most unlikely places; moreover, the light of my own dream fell on the subject: henceforth the pair and all that concerned them were sacred in my sight, and I believed that my boyish constancy would have braved the rack rather than betray their correspondence. I kept my knowledge of it like freemasonry: there was no brother with whom to exchange sign or password; but having learned to be a stranger from my childhood, that solace was not wanted—I would never have found it necessary to mention the ears of Midas to the tree.

If Mr. Temple and Miss Fenton did not perceive an increase of respectful curiosity in my demeanour from that evening, it was because they were not keen observers. I watched them well, and was for some time edified by the silent homage and all but invisible attentions which the music-master paid to the empress of his heart. At times, indeed, the service seemed to be performed with more than requisite humility. The homage was more like that of a slave than a true and gallant knight, but it was evidently to the lady's taste;

and, I regret to say, did not make her appear more amiable in my partial eyes, for her airs grew grander and less tolerable every day. Subsequent experience taught me that this was an effect to be expected in idols of Miss Fenton's mould; but then it made my romance swerve considerably from the line of beauty, and I had great difficulty in bringing it back.

Circumstances made me better acquainted with the lover than the beloved. Mr. Temple was a member of our drawing-class, and I daily expected to see him secretly attempt the portrait of Miss Fenton, as I did Lucy's; to find him writing acrostics on her name on the blank leaves of his sketch-book, or giving some equally significant token of his bondage; but Mr. Temple remained cool and self-possessed, minded his copy—by the way, he never got beyond copying—and I could see nothing remarkable, except that his humbleness of mind seemed to be always left behind him in Hanover Street, and that his reverence for the elder Fenton did not descend to my master. There was not much love lost between the two artists, though both were civil and friendly when they met. The painter thought the musician preferred beyond his merits, and said so in confidential moments to myself; while the teacher of sweet sounds waited only for his absence to remark "that Mr. Harry had thrown away his prospects," and make curious inquiries after his untalked-of days. I am proud to say I never answered any of

those questions except by accident: being Mr. Fenton's boy, I was loyal to the service, and could not like Temple, though his case seemed hopeless as my own; but, in my turn, I became curious after his antecedents, and asked Robert Rose what he knew on the subject, as I helped him with his Latin grammar one afternoon when we were left alone in the painting-room, my master having gone on one of his private visits to Mrs. Sutherland.

Robert never told anything till he was asked, and then he generally made a clean breast of it. Temple was no favourite with him, and he knew nothing of the romance, but he had heard the music-master's early history from the Fentons. His father had been a musician of some repute and more professional pride; he had made an unlucky match, however, with a handsome barmaid; and his family, all girls but Thomas, made settlements in their mother's rank of life.

"I understand," said Robert, "but they don't speak of it in Hanover Street, there was one of them who could not get married. They were very poor then, and she went to work in old Fenton's mill: somebody, they say, found her stealing yarn; and I think it was hard of the old man, but he prosecuted her, and she was transported at the next Assize."

I was about to express my astonishment, when the door opened, and in walked Lavance, handsomely dressed, but looking just as I had seen him last at the hedge in the meadow lane.

"Ah, Mr. Lavance!" said I; and I could say no more, for his second question had always been, "How is your mother?"

"Yes, Freddy, my boy," said he, "here I am;" and I knew by his look he had heard all. "I am come to settle in Manchester for the winter; they tell me it rains better here than in any town in England, and you and I will have great times, drawing together: where's Mr. Fenton?"

I had shoved back the heavy memories by this time, and answered that my master had gone to make a call, I believed; would not he stay and see him?

"Of course I will," said Lavance; "have not I come to be a pupil?" and he deposited a diminutive portmanteau on the sofa, while Robert, who had sat as if preparing himself for something, got up in a very business-like manner, presented his hand, and said,

"How do you do, sir?"

"Well, thank you, Mr. Rose," said Lavance, shaking hands with great cordiality. "I passed Rosebank yesterday, and had the pleasure of seeing your cousin, Miss Lucy; she and your uncle are coming up next week to spend some days among their friends."

I took in this intelligence with both my ears, as the Chinese say. He had been at Rosebank talking to Lucy again! She and her uncle were coming up, and he had come to be a pupil! What did that mean? I would pump Robert

and watch Lavance. Down he sat like one quite at home—told Robert how fine the turnips looked at Rosebank, what numbers of snipes and partridges he saw in the neighbourhood, and what a breadth of wheat his uncle had sown. He asked me all about my drawings, enquired after the Fentons and Rollinsons, but never spoke of Liverpool. While we were talking Johnson came in, unadvisedly as it seemed. He did not start at the sight of our visitor—the discipline of his life was too perfect for that; but he was taken aback, and there was a knowing look in Lavance's eye as he nodded familiarly and said,

"How do you do, Johnson?"

My master returned almost at the same moment, and Lavance was welcomed with heart and hand.

"Where had he been?—why did he stay so long?—surely he was come for a long visit now."

To the first two questions our visitor made no reply; but to the third he responded that he was come to be made an artist: Sir Thomas Lawrence should not have it all his own way.

Lavance was in Manchester all that winter. He took lodgings with the Misses Grove, three maiden sisters in our street, who said their grandfather had owned the half of Salford before that nasty cotton was invented; and being of the blue blood of Lancashire, valued themselves accordingly. They let only the first floor and required an unexceptionable reference. I understood they

allowed no latch-key, and locked the street door punctually at ten. A young curate had been found too gay for them, and a barrister of sixty-five too noisy; but Lavance remained in undisturbed possession as long as he pleased to stay, and left with the highest testimonials to character and conduct. In the meantime he joined our class, but I soon found out it was not to learn. Wherever he had studied the use of the pencil, my master himself was scarce more dexterous with it. I shall never forget his astonished look on discovering that fact from a fine Grecian head which Lavance drew by way of amusement.

"Where the deuce did you learn?" said he, catching him by the arm.

"In Dresden, I think," said Lavance, drawing away.

"And what do you come to me for?—I can teach you nothing!" said the honest Harry Fenton, for such he was with all his faults.

"Do let me stay in your class, Harry," said Lavance in a low tone. "You would not refuse a poor fellow room when he has no place else to go."

I know not what my master answered, but he laughed, and fell to his painting. Lavance came every evening, and often in the day too: half his time was spent talking to us all, and half in drawing figures and landscapes from memory or imagination—I know not which; but the figures had all a military look, and the landscapes were

mostly wild wintry scenes, occasionally diversified with a prospect of a burning town. Sometimes he assisted my master in coloring and the like; but, strange to say, he could do nothing in portrait taking; and once, when I asked him why he did not try, he said, with the saddest look I ever saw, "Oh, Freddy, the faces of the dead come between me and all the living."

Lavance and I grew great friends in spite of my suspicions. His company had an attraction for me which I could never define; and, boy as I was, there seemed something mutual in it, for he associated with me in the class, talked to me about everything; and at length we grew so intimate that he took part in the helping of Robert Rose. Our friendship was almost sealed when Mr. Rose and his grand-daughter arrived, and I perceived that Lavance took scarcely any note of their coming. Lucy and he spoke as kindly as ever when they chanced to meet in the painting-room, and the old gentleman scarcely concealed his amazement to see him there. I heard him afterwards plainly questioning my master on the subject, but all Mr. Fenton could or would tell of his pupil was that he had met him on the Continent, that he thought him eccentric, but he was very kind and very respectable, which Mr. Rose said was his own opinion.

"I thought him a gipsy at first," said the worthy squire: "he came about our place dressed exactly in gipsy fashion, and it could not be want

of money put him in that trim, from the expensive gim-cracks he bought Lucy. He has the manners of a gentleman, and talks French too: by-the-bye, do you know what countryman he is?"

My master could not say. When he asked him about his country, Lavance said he had none now, and wanted nothing of the kind, for it was apt to trouble a man on his travels.

"He's very odd," said Mr. Rose, "and shy, though he don't look it. Many a time I've asked him in to dinner or the like, just for his kindness to Lucy, but he never would cross the threshold; may be on account of his gipsy trim, but now that he has come out in decent clothes he can have no objections. I'll ask him to dine with us at the Bible and Crown."

The above-mentioned establishment, with whose interior, as the attentive reader will doubtless recollect, I was made acquainted at the time of my master's published arrival from London, was Mr. Rose's head-quarters when he sojourned in Manchester. All his connexions there were Whigs and Dissenters; and though he did not object to the exchange of civilities with such people, and was ready to entertain them at Rosebank, it would have been a compromise of dignity for a country gentleman of high Tory principles to make his abode within their walls.

At the Bible and Crown therefore he and his grand-daughter regularly encamped. Thence their company was distributed among the many branches

of kindred-in-law; and the conversation I have recorded took place in my master's painting-room, where they called just in time to find Lavance drawing on his gloves after talking and helping all the morning.

CHAPTER VIII.

We knew him as a stranger, not by trim
Nor speech, but by the fashion of his ways.
Life had gone strangely it may be with him,
And there were dreams that hung about his days
Of a down-trodden cause and luckless war
Wherein his hopes, perchance his heart, had been.
If he had friends or country, they were far,
And had forgotten him; yet blithe of mien,
He was by festive board or greenwood tree
A fearless foeman and a comrade free.
—*Round the Watch Fire.*

THE Roses of Rosebank were considered the flower and garland of our line. I say our, because, since my master began to call me cousin, the best-natured of the Fentons did so too; and I had by this time learned to recognize myself as one of the family. Their stay was a kind of jubilee, which each house celebrated after its own fashion. Mrs. William gave a dinner in their honor, to which the "drudge" came home; and there was a dancing party later in the evening. The Fentons of Hanover Street had them twice to tea, with old china, work, and reading as usual. All the accustomed company were present except the music-master, who was not invited, because Mrs. Fenton liked to preserve proper distinctions; but George officiated in his stead, and the meeting of the senior gentlemen was like that of two rival

monarchs: neither abated a jot of his pretensions; but Mr. Rose kept an unwonted silence on the subject of Whigs and Dissenters, and old Fenton judiciously avoided the Corn Laws.

My master himself gave a party in the painting-room: there was tea, dancing, and supper. Johnson had an uncommonly busy day preparing, but he got through it with his accustomed precision. I was awake half the preceding night, and subsequently heard my master declare that he never knew how much Freddy could do in the way of management before. Everybody was there but the Oak Park people. My master could not venture so high; and though Mr. Rose called there, he and his quondam brother-in-law had nothing like intimacy. Lavance came late, but he did wonders in the way of helping to entertain our guests; and had taught me as much of the country dance in prospect of that festival as enabled me to make a decent figure on the floor with Lucy, to the unconcealed astonishment of George and all the Fentons. It was great times with Robert: he laid aside the Latin Grammar and the minister's brother, and went everywhere with Mr. Rose and Lucy. It was a great time with me too: the old squire had taken me into favor; my master was not over busy, and took a sort of pride to see his boy in such good company. Lucy showed me what I considered particular marks of esteem; and Robert liked to have me with them, because, as the honest fellow said, I could talk and find out

places better than himself. There was but one theatre then in Manchester, and they opened it during the winter. We all went one evening. Charles Kemble had come down from London to play King John, and Lucy went to the box on my arm. It was the first play I had ever seen, and I am sure I talked of it for six months after, thereby getting into several controversies with George Fenton, who did not approve of theatre going, when my master was out, and we should have been drawing.

Mr. Rose's visit was drawing to a close, and all was going merry as a marriage bell, till our evil genius put it into his mind to give a dinner at the Bible and Crown, and invite Lavance. His stays in the painting-room had been shorter since the Roses came. I had seen him bow and speak to them in the street: he always smiled on me when I passed in their company; and what I think brought him chiefly to the old gentleman's remembrance was a beautifully illustrated copy of "Orica," which he gave me to present to Lucy with his compliments. The book had not yet been brought to English. Milliners in Paris still called artificial flowers and gay-colored ribbons by the name of its sable heroine; and I took a mighty resolution over its then unintelligible pages that Lavance should teach me French, if either service or civility could make him. He had written Lucy's name in it, I noticed, with *ie* instead of *y*, and Lucy looked pleased at the same when I presented it to her in my best manner: that was an im-

portant mission—wherefore the name was not otherwise written by my pen. On the following day Mr. Rose's party was projected. The entire connexion were invited except the Rollinsons, whose faces were known to be set against parties; and the Bible and Crown was thrown into a state of general excitement by the preparations. Three days, I think, were allowed to them and the guests; but the same morning, when my master was rubbing in somebody, and I wondering why Lavance did not make his appearance, in walked Mr. Rose, with a remarkably red face, and a small note crumpled up in his fingers.

"Look at this," said he, handing it to my master. "What does the fellow mean, to refuse a gentleman's invitation, and give no earthly reason, after my Lucy having so many presents from him? I'll make her send them every one back to his lodgings. Confound his foreign impudence, does he suppose that an English family of the best blood in the country are to be treated like so many old servants."

My master had read the note, and looked rather confused by this time: he was evidently made responsible for Lavance's conduct in the mind of the worthy squire; and as I had the curiosity to pick it out of the empty fire-place into which that gentleman flung it in his wrath, I can testify that it was the most courteously flat refusal of an invitation that ever came under my eye. Mr. Rose had come to get an explanation, or to relieve his

mind by storming at the offender, whether present or absent. Storm he did with all his heart. The cold and careless politeness of Lavance's note was the thing of all others to provoke his homely pride and genial nature.

"He would write and demand his reasons for such conduct; but it was not worth while, the foreign puppy"—next to Whigs and Dissenters, Mr. Rose had a bad opinion of foreigners—"one might have known he was no gentleman by his awkward tricks, going about like a gipsy: let him only catch the fellow talking French to his Lucy over hedges again; but he would see that she sent back all his rubbish."

My master began in the apologetic style. "It was very strange, but Lavance had odd ways; there was no use in being angry with him, and it was a pity to annoy Lucy." My heart blessed Mr. Fenton for that. "There was surely some reason, and he would talk to Lavance and hear what he had to say."

For some time Mr. Rose would listen to nothing but the breaking off of all diplomatic relations, particularly insisting on the immediate return of the "rubbish;" but, as the old gentleman's indignation was worked off, his better sense prevailed; he at length agreed "that the matter was not worth making a row about; that if Lavance missed a good dinner it was his own loss, he and his friends could enjoy themselves without him; but Harry must tell him that since he could not

accept civilities he had better keep his distance." My master had no relish for that business. He always stood in a kind of uncertainty with Lavance, whether owing to the loan or earlier transactions I knew not. Moreover, his family pride took part with the Roses; so, as soon as the old gentleman was gone, he called me to his council.

"Freddy," said he, "this is very queer of Mr. Lavance; of course he knows his own business best, but you heard what Mr. Rose said, and he's a man of his word if there's one in Derbyshire. I'm rather busy to-day, ahem"—my master was doing nothing at all—"and I know he has a liking for you, and won't be angry; just step over, like a good boy, and tell him all about it quietly, you know Freddy."

"Mr. Fenton," said Johnson, who had entered in time to hear part of the story; "if I may take upon me to advise you, don't send Master Frederic to that gentleman with any message that might disturb him, for I'm sure his temper's none of the best."

"How do you know that, Johnson?" said my master, with marked surprise.

"I judge it, sir, from the first sight I had of him; and if you or any of your family have got into disputes with him, take my advice, sir, and let him alone."

"Where did you see him first, Johnson?" said my master; and there was something like fear in his look.

"Well, sir, since you must know, it was at Waterloo, when we were storming Hougoumont, and I can tell you there was not a better swordsman on the ground that day: have nothing to do with him, sir, in the way of fighting;" and Johnson looked very impressive.

"Why did you not tell us that before?" said I, in my boyish eagerness. "Was he in your regiment, Johnson? Why hasn't he a medal?"

"He was not on the side as got medals, Master Frederic," replied the man of discipline.

"Whu," said my master, "is that the case? I always thought there was something queer about Lavance;" but here Mr. Fenton recovered himself, and added, "he is a most respectable man, and moves in the best society."

"Of course, sir," said Johnson; "and bygones is bygones; but one as saw the like can't forget it; and I must say he does not look good when he's fighting."

It had been always my impression that Lavance must have seen Johnson doing something past the common of bad actions, from the admonished look he wore in his presence, and the knowing glance Lavance was in the habit of giving him. Now the secret was out, and how unlike my imaginings. The old soldier had recognized the remarkable face of his master's friend as that of an enemy seen in the most terrible episode of that great battle which people still talked of as the last event in Europe. History seemed to stand still at it yet. The cele-

brations of the victory were fresh in everybody's memory. The generation that had done and suffered, lost and won, through the long preceding war, still filled the world's offices, and did the world's business. The party spirit, by which that war had been carried on, was yet fiercely active in clubs, in newspapers, and wherever men met each other. Among the middle and mercantile classes of England it especially prevailed. To have been fighting "on the side that got no medals" would scarcely give a passport to Manchester society. I might have learned that from the effect of Johnson's revelation on my master: he looked uncommonly sober for half an hour after; and, when his man was gone, reverted to the subject for the purpose of assuring me that "it must be a mistake; these old soldiers were always telling wonders." He catechised Johnson on it privately; and so did I, using great circumspection, one day when we were alone, for though the man had been always partial to me, it was one of his principles "that young people should not hear everything."

Johnson's story was brief, and told without variations.

"It was when we were storming Hougoumont for the last time, I saw him in the dark green uniform of the French Chasseurs with gold epaulets—you see he must have been an officer—and a rag of the tricolor in his hand, fighting like Old Harry at the head of his company. I never was as near getting my head shaved clean off,

but Providence and Bill Sims' bayonet turned the stroke, and when the farmhouse was blazing he was one of them that jumped from the windows and cut their way right through our line: but don't speak of it, Master Frederic; there ain't no use in calling up old confusions."

I followed this judicious counsel the more closely, because the facts I had just learned not only deepened the mystery which hung about Lavance, but invested him with an almost heroic interest in my sight. I had read the history of what people then called the "late war." Half written as it still remains—a task in reserve for posterity—I suppose no man ever read that history in his youth without becoming a partisan for the time; and I had inherited, doubtless from my evil stars, a strong inclination to the losing side. Time and knowledge of the world have done much to correct that very imprudent tendency, particularly since I grew rich and respectable; but at the period under consideration I had a natural antipathy, not unmixed with contempt, to all successful parties. Right or wrong, wise or wayward, whoever lost was my pearl of price; whoever was defeated became my chosen among ten thousand. I admired Mark Antony as much for being beaten as for Cleopatra's sake: I delighted in the Gracchi: I had a strong prejudice in favor of Catiline, and a great respect for the Carthaginians. The politics and philosophy of sixteen can interest nobody but their owners, and

seldom travel far even with them. Yet to those early beliefs we return from many conversions. However vague or mistaken, they were the faith of a freer time, before we worshipped the world or its image and received its mark on our foreheads and on our hands. Well, at sixteen I did not swear by the Holy Alliance, or give thanks for Waterloo as a crowning mercy. I doubt if I were even a good British subject; and here was Lavance, a man who had served in the last Grand Army, who had lived and acted in the great overthrown empire of which men talked so much, who had heard the bulletins, and perhaps seen the Emperor!

Henceforth a gleam of that departed glory shone about him, and his dark face woke up a world of wonder and surmise. In what famous victories, in what terrible lost battles, had he borne his part? What scenes of splendor or of ruin did he see and share? Had he carried despatches? had he led forlorn hopes? was he anybody's aide-de-camp? Nobody but Lavance could tell me; and I may remark, as *apropos* of the subject, that Lavance was one of the few men whom I could never question. There were mysteries that came nearer home: he had entered the orbit of my own life, and mingled with my dream of Lucy. I knew he was no rival now; but her mother was French—could they be relations? There was no family likeness, and Lucy seemed to know little of him; but why was he so kind to her while so peremp-

torily declining her grandfather's advances? What I would have given for an authentic account of Lucy's parentage. The secret seemed to lie in that direction, but it was one of the subjects on which Robert Rose would not speak. All the Fentons kept an equally strict silence, and it was a frosty friendship that existed between them and myself. My master knew it of course, and had been long acquainted with Lavance, yet Johnson's story startled him; and it might have been a fancy of mine, but ever after his face took the same warned look which I used to remark in his man when Lavance entered; and often, as he helped, or lounged, or laughed about the room, the painter seemed troubled with something very like fear of him.

When I reached the genteel spinsters' mansion, to intimate Mr. Rose's wrath, and get an explanation from their lodger, the servant-maid who admitted me looked as if she had been caught listening; and, while ascending to the drawing-room, I became aware that Lavance was singing with great spirit for such a sober house. A fine tenor voice he had—I knew it well from frequently hearing him sing snatches of French songs in the painting-room when he was in high spirits. Now he was evidently practising something from a written paper. The song was new to me then; it may not be so to some who will read these pages, for many a time I have heard it since, and hope to be excused if I have made a defective translation.

"Sit down, Frederic," said he, "till the service

is finished; you perceive the old maids are gone out to tea."

Down I sat, and he sang on, recommencing, for my edification, the strain of which I did not understand a word, but the notes were a most musical mingling of mirth and melancholy. He told me afterwards it was an old Breton air, and the song, of which I believe Lavance to have been the author, was known to himself and friends by the style and title of

OUR PARTY.

We have not a country—we have not a creed—
But ours is the story that ages shall read;
And ours are the songs of the poets to come,
When the nations that know us are nameless and dumb.
We dream of a glory no failure could check—
We know of an exile that never came back—
Of a grave lying low on a far island shore—
Of a tale which the brave of all time shall deplore—
Of a star that can fall from the zenith no more,
And there lies the life of our party.

An empire of memory—an army of mind—
A bond for the hearts which no other can bind—
Through nations and kindreds—by altar and throne,
They serve every standard and love but their own.
The life of the watcher wends weary away—
The arm will grow weak and the hair will grow grey—
The want and the wandering must come to an end—
But the sire to the son, and the friend to the friend,
As a charge and a trust, which all others transcend,
Bequeaths the proud hopes of our party.

Who wait for old Time find their wish on his wings—
Let them seal up their compacts and set up their kings—
Let them build on their troops—let them trust in their towers—
The heart and the hope of the brave land are ours.
The Fates have declared it by sign and by seer—
By priests in their hatred—by kings in their fear—
By whispers of prophecy sent through the crowd—
Which all have repeated but no man avowed—
By wand'rers returned from the land of the shroud,
That victory comes to our party.

It comes to the world which has counted us foes,
And yet with our strength the world's liberty grows;
From Rome to Vienna, that work we shall do
Which foiled its reformers and democrats too. —
The future of Europe is purchased from Fate—
Alas! for the offering we made her was great—
But the price has been paid, and the work shall be done,
And the long cowering eagle soar up to the sun;
Yet the tear must still flow when the battle is won
For the leader and life of our party.*

"Mr. Lavance," said I, "what is it all about?" when he had finished and laid down the paper with an air of great satisfaction.

"It's not about money-making, or chapel-building, or anything you would hear of among the Fentons, but just a slight *resumé* of things as they are and as they will be, put into French verse for the convenience of people who want something to sing in these dull times; but tell me your news, Frederic?" and he threw himself down on the sofa beside me.

I had been intrusted with a delicate commission, and made great preparations for opening my budget, but the song had swept them all into oblivion, and I could recollect nothing but "Mr. Rose is very angry because you refused his invitation, and they all want to know the reason."

"Mr. Rose has been angry many a time, I dare say," said Lavance; "and reasons are not always convenient. Tell Mr. Fenton, from me, not to disturb himself about the matter; it is my way of keeping up society."

"But, Mr. Lavance," said I, growing bolder and

* This song was written in 1838.

more confidential, "Old Rose says you must not come talking over hedges, or bringing gim-cracks, to Miss Lucy, for his family are not to be treated like old servants."

"Of course not," said Lavance, and his smile grew bitterly sarcastic. "The Roses of Rosebank are great people, and sowed turnip-seed soon after the Deluge; but," he added, with a softened look, "I don't want to trouble the old man; he's had trouble enough from the same quarter, as we all annoy each other somehow. I'll talk no more to Lucy, though she is the finest girl in the county: is not that true, Freddy?" and he looked me in the face, to my great confusion.

That was another thread of the Parcæ spinning between Lavance and me. He had found out my great secret—the only archives my life had then; but Lavance would not tell it—he was silent on other people's stories as well as his own; and turned the conversation immediately to the painting-room—Mr. Fenton's sitters, the Manchester people in general, and his own intention "to set up in the portrait line." The end of it was that he made me stay to supper; and as scolloped oysters and one's share of a bottle of port were great helps to confidence in those days, Mr. Lavance was made acquainted with my private opinions on all subjects, from European politics down to George Fenton, before we parted for the night.

I don't think my master was perfectly satisfied

with the success of my mission. He pretended to laugh when I told him Lavance's message next morning; but asked me three times, with curious variations of the question, if our friend had given any hint of his reasons, or what dislike he had to Mr. Rose. I stood stoutly up for it, that Lavance did not dislike the old gentleman, because it was my honest belief that nobody could; but when, in my fervour, I repeated what he had said about not wishing to trouble the old man, and his getting trouble enough from the same quarter, my master looked blank for a moment, as if he had found out something that frightened him, and then said, "Mr. Lavance was a strange person," and walked to the window.

I heard him say the same to old Rose, and the Squire agreed with him. No further notice was taken of Lavance's refusal, and the party came off with becoming observances. Mr. Rose and his grand-daughter went back to Rosebank, and things settled down in the old channel. We had the sitters—they were growing fewer; the drawing-class—it was not on the increase; the Thursday evenings of work and *Record* reading in Hanover Street; the little party at Mrs. William's; more frequent comings of Mary Ann; more stolen visits to the genteel boarding-house; and at length I thought there was a resumption of visits to the house at the corner also.

There is an erratic element in man, of which your sober, plodding six o'clock people may take

no account; but it prevails more or less throughout the world, making vagrancy sweet, gipsy life pleasant, and all kinds of stimulus welcome alike to the savage and the civilized. It had power over Harry Fenton. I know not if different circumstances would have made him a wiser man: he always laid the blame on his fortunes, as most of us do. I never could find out where the man ended and his stars began in any case of the kind; but his absence from the painting-room became frequent and prolonged. Mary Ann's messages increased in number. There was a small corner cupboard in the library, just behind the bust of Minerva, which began to be locked; and when my master came from it his old gaiety had always come back for the time.

CHAPTER IX.

It was the summer moonlight of my life,
Silent, but filled with one great dream of beauty,
As if Diana walked once more on Latmus.
The winters came, but found no frost for it:
Old autumn seared the leaves, but left it green —
The outer world with all its dues and customs—
Its wants and works, went by, but could not enter,
Yet the sweet season passed to come no more.
—*Count Ernest's Play.*

THE white-days of one's life, whether few or many, have little history: like a stream in a smooth channel, they glide away without sound or observation, and leave only a clear cool track in the memory. Notwithstanding that my fortune and prospects consisted of Mr. Fenton's patronage, with the surroundings I have described, and the contingencies to be foreseen, I, Frederic Favoursham, gentleman, look back on this period with something very like envy of my former self. There was, indeed, a great sorrow lying in the low back ground, like a snow wreath in the hollow of a mountain side, for I had lost my mother, and was alone in the world; but things went well with me —I had no want, I had no care, I was not much snubbed, nobody thought me a child, my master raised my wages, he called it salary, and talked

of giving me a good education, "for I was his cousin."

Partly for this purpose, and partly to help Robert Rose, whose delay over the Eton grammar rather perplexed his uncle, it was arranged that I should take lessons three evenings in the week from the Baptist minister's brother. He was a pale, patient young man, with a broad white forehead and a dry cough. If he knew anything but Latin and the first book of Euclid, I am not aware of it; but the fame of his learning was prodigious among the Baptists, and I was told he had given up one of the best chapels in Lancashire on account of some scruples about the faith of assurance. He married afterwards a widow with seven children, wrote a large book on the above-mentioned subject, and died years ago; but when I knew him, he was the man for jots and tittles—I never saw such conscience in a small way; and whatever were his teaching fees, I knew not—the Roses paid all in consideration of my assistance; but they were honestly earned, for Mr. Reed never spared himself. Under his administration, in Mrs. Fenton's little back parlour, I got pretty well grounded in Latin and a smattering of mathematics. As for my only class-fellow, I may say, once for all, that neither help nor teaching could avail, and I doubt if he were ever perfect in the six declensions. Nature did not design Robert Rose for a scholar, at least in this world; if he had any talents, they remained latent, perhaps for the coming life; but a

better temper or more kindly disposition was never known to me. Robert had a sort of good sense too, which always directed him to the wisest and quietest way of things. I had many proofs of it, and at this time we were great friends; he had given me to understand his attachment to Lucy, and might have guessed out my secret, we talked so much about Rosebank and all pertaining to it, but Robert never regarded me as a rival; on the contrary, he made me his confident, and told me his troubles, all but one, which I found out for myself, that he kept a jealous eye on George Fenton.

Steady youth, he went regularly to the factory, and was getting a knowledge of business. I met him every second evening in our drawing-class, making respectable copies, which I could never do, for my unsuitability for art was becoming manifest even to myself. I had nothing of the painter in me, and was neither surprised nor disappointed at that discovery, only it would have been something to beat George.

"He'll never be an artist neither, Freddy," said Lavance, as we turned over the rival sketch-books one forenoon when my master was out, which was often the case now.

"He has no artistic power; the eye wants perception, the mind taste; your cousin possesses but the hand of a mechanic; let him stick to the factory, I dare say he'll make money."

That verdict on George was highly satisfactory.

It exactly tallied with my own opinion. I had already begun to consider him representatively the plodding wealthy trader, and myself one of the band of Romeos, Valentines, and other poor discountenanced but very attractive young gentlemen. Lavance gave me many consolations of the kind; he had always been friendly, but now grew familiar. Perhaps our characters had some common centre, which neither could trace through the difference of years and fortunes; perhaps he knew that I admired him, and the man was lonely. I have said that he rather avoided my master of late; into the Fentons' circle he did not care to enter, though admission would have been easy, for he was rich, and they were all curious about him. I never knew that he had any associates in Manchester, but I saw him pass occasionally with queer-looking foreigners; sometimes he disappeared from my sight for days together, and then came back to lounge in the painting-room, where I was left on guard, talking to me or giving a touch to the portraits, which now began to be called for, and found unfinished.

It was on one of these occasions that, having worked round to the point, I put my entire resources of flattery in requisition, to induce him to teach me "French," commencing with,

"Oh, Mr. Lavance, I would give the whole world to be able to speak it as you do."

"To Lucy, Freddy?" said he, with a sly smile. "Wait till you have the whole world, and we'll

talk about giving it. The *parlez vous* is my native tongue;" and Lavance's eye lighted up, as if in that fact he had the victory over all his enemies. "I wanted to teach your father, at Cambridge, twenty years ago. Oh, you are ashamed of him, are you"—he interrupted himself, noticing something disconcerted in my look—"well, you need not; he was a generous, liberal-minded fellow, far handsomer than you, and not half so cunning. Your father was a fool, Freddy," continued my comforter, throwing himself back on the chair, and talking as if he had been thinking aloud; "a fool, for he lost his chance of a legacy; but nothing to what you'll be, nothing to what I've been; we all take it in turn, every man after his own fashion; but now for *avoir* and *être*."

So Lavance taught me a smattering of French, which I showed off to Lucy on the first opportunity when we all went down at Christmas, and Rosebank House was as gay as evergreens and good cheer could make it. The Roses came up and the Fentons went down; there was little work and much play. My master's sitters grew fewer. He had many squabbles about pictures that were to have had blue dresses and appeared in scarlet. Old Fenton gave him lectures, which nobody was permitted to hear. The dirty silk gown began to be seen in the painting-room, to Johnson's great dismay. The absence of the artist became longer and more frequent, tradesmen's bills were sent in with urgent demands

for payment; and Robert Rose said "he was afraid things were going wrong again." I thought so too, but did not fear—it was not my nature when I was young: but weeks and months sped away; I learned and smattered, and dreamed, and was happy.

Whether it originated with Lucy, Lavance, or the Baptist minister's brother, I could never ascertain, but a general impression "that Freddy was clever" came upon our circle. All my spare time was, consequently, employed to maintain that reputation. I hunted for new books, I translated French phrases, I made out riddles, I copied a great many verses, and composed some watery imitations of Moore and Byron—in their most moral veins, were those youthful compositions. They were new poets then, and charmed me as they will charm the young of many a generation. I suppose half the school-boys in England were scribbling in the same fashion. But one of my pieces, beginning "Flower of the Roses," was sent to Lucy on Valentine's-day—she never knew who wrote it; and another concerning beauty was shown to my friend Robert, who showed it to everybody, and they all prophesied I should be a poet. That was a victory gained over George Fenton; he could not put a verse together for all his father's factory, and I triumphed accordingly, but pretended to be modest, kept my poems under lock and key, and let fall hints and scraps of paper in George's presence, just by acci-

dent. The boy had sense enough to take no note of them; only once he told me that poets were always poor, and I took every subsequent occasion to express my scorn of the vulgar rich, and animadvert on the contemptibility of traders. Lavance's friendship, or, at least, his company, was every day on the increase; he taught me many things and told me more. The man was wild and free in his fashion of thinking, as I learned long after, but to me he never uttered a word calculated "to undermine my morals," till I knew the world as well as himself. One day I found nerve to declare my political opinions, but he bid me beware of Charybdis, and his face took so sad and strange a look that I never again ventured openly on the subject, though I think it made us more confidential.

It was the beginning of June, Manchester ladies were thinking of their summer things, and I thought the painting-room wanted cleaning up for summer sitters, when Lavance came in earlier in the forenoon than usual, with his coat buttoned up—for the east wind was still blowing—and a light cane he always carried—I knew there was a sword in it.

"Freddy," said he, "I'm going away, and I don't think you'll be much longer here; if I could help your master I would do it, but it is out of my power now. Will you tell him that I left all sorts of farewells for him; I can't say when I'll come back, but you and I will meet

again Frederic, and I want you to take charge of this for me."

He put a large sealed letter into my hand, and I saw there was no address on it, adding,—

"If you don't hear from me within a month or so, open it, and you'll find my address, but don't speak of it to your master, nor anybody else."

I wanted to ask him where he was going, when I would see him again, and if there was anything wrong, but he bid me tell Lucy not to forget him, asked me what trade or profession I liked best, "for steady people must do something to get an honest living, and bring up their families." And told me of a new poetess, called Felicia Hemans.

"I can't stay longer now, Frederic," he continued, "we have had a great deal of talk together, and we will have more; by-the-bye, have you heard of the death of Louis XVIII.? They say it is in the *Morning Chronicle;* but take care of the packet, and good morning, my boy."

He shook my hand, and was gone in a moment. I watched him from the window until he was out of sight, for his pace was always rapid, and returned to my work with the brushes and colors, to find the painting-room wonderfully dingy, and my mind troubled about ways and means.

I missed Lavance, his teaching, and his talk; but that was not all, his leave-taking had somehow woke me up to a sense of the instability of my master's affairs, and my own footing. Business or profession I had none; all my relations were

distant, and by no means ready to assume responsibility with other people's children. Since I left their sheltering roof, my aunt and uncle had acknowledged my existence only by writing once a quarter to my master to ask "How Freddy was behaving?" my cousin Ned had withdrawn from all his connexions into the household of the pious bookseller, on whose eldest daughter he was believed to have matrimonial designs. Dick was still unheard of, though I more than once fancied I had seen a face like his looking out of a back window of a low chop-house in Mill-lane, which was a short cut to Hanover Street. In short, my prospects were not encouraging, and the signs of the times told me that painter and painting-room must soon be numbered among the things that were in Manchester. My worldly cares seemed to have gone with my poor mother, but, unlike her, to return. There was nobody to work or save for, and the most pious of the early confessors could not have taken less thought for the morrow than I. Providence knows how long I would have been content to maintain my reputation for cleverness, and get my daily bread like the rest of the ravens; but, for the second time in my life, fortune recalled me to those ancient and ever-interesting queries—"What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?" I think it must be a great inexperience never to have known them, but that defect was not in my education. I was not yet

eighteen, yet I found their second recurrence by no means as manageable as the first; we always grow more urgent on the quest as life wears on, and the time before us shortens. Besides, I did not like the prospect of losing my master. To whomsoever he was a defaulter, he had been my first friend, who took me out of Old Bridge Street, which I was disposed to reckon "the land of Egypt, and the house of bondage;" and I would have petitioned for leave to live on anything, and go with him to Baden Baden,—that being the only resting-place of all his continental pilgrimage known to me; but against the genteel boarding house my respectability rose in arms.

Mr. Fenton came home very late, and with rather an unsteady step that evening. When I told him of Lavance's departure, he put on a moralist air, which had become frequent with him of late, and said—

"I am not sorry on your account, Frederic. It is true Mr. Lavance was a friend, that is to say, an acquaintance of mine—we artists pick up a great many odd people—but he is an unsafe companion for youth; his principles are not sound, and I fear he has no sense of religion; in short" —and he steadied himself against the wall—"I would advise you to keep less of his company in future. I'm your guardian in a manner, and must look after your morals. You're a good boy, but evil communication you know,—good night, Freddy; mind you say your prayers, and call me

at nine, for I hear that old scoundrel Wightman has been scolding because his portrait is not finished; hang him, does he suppose that a man of my abilities has nothing to do but paint such a money-grubbing face as his?" and my master moved to his rest with music, for he went to bed singing—

"Begone dull care," etc.

Henceforth his abidings at the "genteel boarding-house" became longer and more frequent; he always came home in high spirits, and rose very low in the morning. Johnson's face lengthened every day, though he seemed relieved to hear of Lavance's farewell, as if thereby he had got rid of the storming of Hougoumont; but his punctuality was redoubled, and his regularity became dreadful —it was Johnson's method of rebuking the derelictions of his master. Little and large accounts poured in from every quarter. I grew terribly ashamed of saying "Mr. Fenton was not at home," and hearing the lectures thereon delivered. Mary Ann made evening incursions for busts, books, and all sorts of articles, which never re-appeared. The drawing-class was broken up; George would not attend it now, of course Mr. Temple followed in his wake, and Mrs. William kept her "talented boy" at home. Robert Rose continued faithful to the painting-room and the Latin Grammar, but there were no more Thursday evenings in Hanover Street, and the Baptist minister's brother looked particularly solemn when I entered the back-parlour.

I can't say how long things continued in this state; but one morning when the days were growing short, and the first of the winter fogs had come down on Manchester, I rose to find Johnson leisurely gathering together all the traps and trifles which he could claim on the premises. I also observed, with some dismay, that my master had not returned over-night, and asked the steady man if he had left any message.

"No, Master Frederic," said Johnson, "and I don't think he'll send any for some time. Old Wightman, of the Bible and Crown, has got a writ out against him; he's not in town at all, you understand," and Johnson's look grew very significant: "it would be wise of you, Master Frederic, to pack up your baggage and go to your friends, for they'll be down on the place as soon as it gets wind."

Expected as it might have been, this intelligence came on me like a thunder-clap. I had no notion of my master's retiring from business in such a manner, without warning or intimation to his boy, and felt myself betrayed and abandoned in the enemy's country. That they would be down on the place as soon as it got wind, I had no doubt. My baggage, as Johnson called it, was easily packed up; but where to find those fountains of consolation, my friends, to whom he recommended me to go, I could not divine. There was a chronic uncertainty on that subject, which continued all the days of my poverty, and has,

doubtless, been experienced by many in similar circumstances. Back to Old Bridge Street I was determined not to go; indeed, I had an inward conviction that my welcome there would not be warm; but Johnson was clearing out, and my spirit rose to the occasion. I asked him if he could give my traps houseroom till I could think of something: he responded, "Master Frederic, I'll be proud to accommodate you;" and my Sunday suit, my poems, and my poor mother's keepsakes, were safe in his quarters before an execution was put in the painting-room, which event took place at half-past eleven the same forenoon. Had my trunk been filled with coined gold, I believe it would have been secure in Johnson's keeping. There was an upright pillar of honesty in the old soldier, whatever he might have plundered in his time; but I kept Lavance's packet about me: who knew what compromising matters it might contain—his journal of the "Hundred Days," his Cross of the Legion of Honor, or his commission to serve in the Grand Army.

Well, the execution was in the painting-room, watched over by two dirty-looking men, who sat with two pipes and a pot of porter between them at my master's bijoux table. They were the guardians of Mr. Gittens, the landlord's interests. I understood it was the third transaction in which that gentleman had been engaged with my master's furniture, and a notable lawsuit between him and Slatterley, the upholsterer, came out of that very

business. I was far too proud to remain in such company; and having, besides the above-mentioned estates personal, ten shillings saved out of the last receipts from Mr. Fenton, I did the independent, and took lodgings for myself on the strength of that exchequer. There was a lane behind King Street in those days, appropriately called Crown Alley. It was inhabited by laundresses, tailors, and little shopkeepers, and among the latter there was a decent elderly widow, who sold stationery and sundry small wares, for which I frequented her shop. She had a son, a lame sickly young man, who had met with an accident, and used to clarify quills and make sealing wax. They were somehow related to Johnson, for he went to see them on Sundays, and said, "Considering that Mrs. Glass was but a woman, she had a deal of sense and reason;" and there was an air of hard-working honesty about the firm. The widow's house consisted of the shop, a kitchen, in which she and her son abode, and a room above, which she let, and it was her boast that she "never took in nothing but single gentlemen." I answered to that description; and as the exclusive apartment in question had been vacant for the last five weeks, I at once applied to the widow. If her heart did not sing for joy, she seemed right glad to see a lodger. Johnson had probably prepared her mind for the change in our affairs, as she expressed no surprise, but at once covenanted "to do for me at 2*s.* 6*d.* per week." The room was low and narrow;

it had a window at one end and a bed at the other, set against the fire-place, for Mrs. Glass said "she never know'd anybody as had a fire in that room, and she didn't think the chimney would draw, not being used to it." Moreover, there was a table and two chairs, a small looking-glass hanging against the wall, a brownish-colored print, said to be "Peace and Plenty;" and I took possession, by depositing my few books on the table, and inwardly arranging to fetch my trunk with my own haughty hands in the evening.

It was a day of Manchester misery. The fog had softened to a dreary drizzle of cold rain; the little sky, with which that enterprising town is generally favoured, was not to be seen; the streets were ankle-deep; and I walked up and down my new residence in a vain endeavour to get warm, when I heard myself inquired for by a well-known voice below, and without stop or prelude in walked George Fenton.

"Good morning, George," said I, having taken the precaution to be absorbed in a book,—it was my Latin Dictionary, which happened to come to hand.

"What are you doing here, Frederic?" said he, losing no time in courteous comment, and looking round him with a supercilious glance which roused my pride from its lair. "Reading," said I, "till this confounded rain stops, and I can see about something."

"I think you'll have to see about getting your

living," said George, seating himself on the other chair. "This is a sad business for us all, as well as you, but we could expect nothing else; Harry will never be steady, and since he has left you in such a fix, I think I can get you a place in our factory."

My rival, my adversary, between whom and me there was a strife like that of Scipio and Hannibal; and, like the former, fortune favoured him: did he want me for his underling, to be commanded and rebuked? No! death before dishonour; I would sweep a crossing first. All this and more passed through my mind while George was speaking, and I answered with the air of my Lord, waving off Mr. Smith's advances,—"Thank you, George, but I don't like anything connected with trade, particularly a mechanical occupation—it cramps a man's mind so."

"Indeed," said George, rising; I saw he was angry by the compressed lip and flashing eye,—"then I wish you good-morning, and a better opportunity of working for your bread, Master Frederic," and he slammed the door as though the whole mercantile might of Manchester had been in his arm.

CHAPTER X.

'Tis not diversity of race alone,
Nor distant lands, nor widely-parting seas,
That make men to each other wights unknown.
Nature hath gulfs less passable than these,
'Twixt minds of different moulds they live hard by,
Yea, meet at hearth, or board, and yet are strange,
Whereof comes much of life's perplexity,
And there are sad mistakes for time to change.
—*The Traveller's Tale.*

I WONDER how many of all the good turns done in this great and benevolent country are made null and void by the ungracious fashion of their performance. George Fenton's offer to me that morning was kindly and, I believe, generously meant, and would have been gladly accepted had it been made in more agreeable terms, for my position was none of the best; but presented as it was, in the light of my fallen fortunes, the necessity of working for my living, etc., I hated him for his pains, and sincerely rejoiced over the effect of my fire concerning "trade and mechanical occupations." Neither George nor I could do each other justice; our minds looked out in different directions, and never saw the same clouds or stars. He went home and told the household in Hanover Street "of my sauce." They all scolded and called me names

which I most justly deserved: "impertinent brat," "puffed-up thing," and so forth, together with many prophecies beginning with the workhouse and ending with Botany Bay. What the old ruler said never reached my ears, but it must have been edifying; and, by his decree, the entire family, to its uttermost branches, were enjoined to leave me to my own devices, with the intimation that if I brewed well I should drink the better. This edict seemed particularly popular among the Fentons. No youth could be more completely left to the guidance of his own wisdom: even Mrs. William deserted my cause, having found out that "I insulted the family, and would disgrace them;" while my worthy relations in Liverpool kept a prudent silence, though, as I heard afterwards from the Whittles, "they hoped some of his rich friends would look after Freddy."

The Hanover Street decrees had no authority at Rosebank; and I have forgotten to mention, that some days before the disappearance of Mr. Harry Fenton, my friend Robert Rose had retired to its friendly shelter. He had taken what he called the first of his winter colds. They came to him in a serial form every season, for Robert was not strong in the chest department; and though his peaceable nature could hold out against the deadly precision of the Fenton life in his days of health, it became too much for him when sickness intervened, and he sought refuge under the less rigorous discipline of the Manor House. Nothing of the change in

the painting-room was yet known there. The Fentons disdained to write on such a subject, and I would not be the first to communicate my own mishaps, lest it should be construed into an application for assistance. My heart stood high in this beginning of adventures. I would let them see that I could look after myself. They had all allowed I was clever, and clever people must be wanted.

Strong in hope, and despising from my soul all forms of trade, the press seemed my legitimate vocation. My master had once painted the Editor of the *Freeman*, a lately established journal in the Radical interest: he had taken some notice of me in the painting-room; and to his office I repaired in search of employment. I was then as innocent of all that concerned newspaper business as an unfledged cuckoo; and my introduction into the Editor's sanctuary, a remarkably dusty back-room, overwhelmed me with confusion. I remember saying that I would maintain democratic principles and write verses for his widely-circulated journal, on which Mr. Smith, for he belonged to that legion, expressed his deep regret at having no room on his staff for a young man of such undoubted talent, and wished me a very good morning. I applied, with similar success, to all the Liberal papers in Manchester,—their names and offices have slipped out of my recollection; but I diligently eschewed the Tory papers—they were more numerous then, for it was the uppermost side; but, in those days

of high principle, the fortunes which my kind relations predicted for me seemed preferable to working for a Tory journal. All who have gone in search of work will believe that I was not always dismissed with Mr. Smith's civility: one told me he wanted no new hands, another said I was too young, and a third advised me to get some experience. I answered two advertisements for tutors, one for an assistant usher in a large school, and another for a parish clerk; but there came no response to my proposals, and I had many a wet walk through the muddy streets, and many a weary return to my fireless room in the winter evenings.

Meantime nothing was seen or heard of my vanished master, notwithstanding the diligent inquiries of his creditors. When he was asked for at the "genteel boarding-house," Mrs. Sutherland, being then in a "narvous turn," said "she knew nothing about him, the ne'er-do-weel:" his relatives utterly banished him from their recollection; but that remnant of grace, which I had often occasion to admire in the unlucky man, prompted him to write to old Mr. Rose. The letter, as poor Robert told me, was dated from London, but bore no other address, and contained nothing but a request "to do something for poor Freddy." Johnson brought me a letter next morning from the kindly Squire. It had come by the early post, and been delivered at the painting-room, where a sale had already commenced.

Mr. Rose "was sorry to hear that Harry's affairs had gone wrong, but he never was steady, poor fellow; and if I would come down to Rosebank he would see what could be done, for Lucy wanted me badly to help with her drawings, and Robert would forget all his Latin if he had not a lesson or two while the cold lasted."

Worthy, warm-hearted old man, it is the comfort of these well-to-do, lonely, latter days of mine, that I had no hand in all the troubles that beleaguered his life. His letter enclosed a note from Lucy, containing the distilled spirit of her grandfather's epistle, and ending with "Come down, Freddy dear, and help us all, for we can't get on without you."

I half believed that—and I have kept both letters these two-and-twenty years—but I would not go to be a poor dependent on the family. Even the Roses should see that I was able to make my own way in the world; so I wrote back—the powers of truth forgive me—that I could not leave Manchester just then, on account of a little situation, of which I had some prospect; but I was grateful—that, at least, was true—for all their kindness and remembrance of one who had so little claim upon them; and the sentiment was the more elegantly expressed in my note to Lucy, as it cost me full three hours to compose it. I suppose the Roses believed me, for Robert or the old Squire wrote every second day to ask if I had got the situation; and the fibs I wrote back

would have made a Quaker's hair stand on end for life. I have forgotten the most of them; but not how my shillings melted away as the winter days grew colder and darker, in spite of my intense desire to save and the economical management of Mrs. Glass. I am sure she had no hand in the cookery book; and my hope is that few fair hands prepare such unsavoury messes as I have eaten under the honest woman's roof; but her culinary powers were not overtaxed by my requisitions. I assured her that neither mutton, beef, nor ham agreed with me; that my fancy's flight was entirely confined to bread and cheese, and latterly to bread alone, with an occasional drink of small beer. The widow and her son must have thought me an eccentric lodger; it is probable that they guessed the state of my funds, for the good woman more than once brought me up a cup of tea when I came in cold and hungry, making many apologies for the act, and hoping I would excuse "her poor old china as had never got handles;" but they always called me the young gentleman, never seemed to know that I was poor, and were much encouraged therein by Johnson, who continued to touch his hat when I chanced to pass, and salute me as "Master Frederic." I have seen wealthy households in which there was not the peace and pleasure that reigned between the hard-working widow and her sickly son: he has long since ceased from quills and sealing-wax, having gone where accidents are not to be met with; and I have had

the pleasure of helping his mother out of difficulties after she married a Chelsea compatriot of Johnson's, who drank up her shop and credit in a twelvemonth.

Notwithstanding the financial measures I have detailed, and the additional expedient of depositing at that establishment popularly known as "my uncle's," a gilt pin, a silver pencil-case, and sundry Latin books, I had come to my last shilling without finding a remunerating field for my cleverness. Whether that possession was real or imaginary, the experience of many an after year convinced me that a less marketable commodity man could not own. I did all that my pride permitted, and more, to get the means of living, though ever so small. I polished up one of my poems, "Lines to an Early Snowdrop," which appeared seasonable, and dropped it into the *Freeman's* letter-box, with an epistle to the editor setting forth that I was the young man who had the honor of calling upon him, my peculiar circumstances, and my willingness to do anything in a respectable way,—hoping to move his mind in the cause of unnoticed talent. He had little news that week and therefore printed it with my initials, and said "I was a youth of the brightest promise," but told me he was sorry he had nothing for me to do, and the paper never paid for verses. Mine were in print, however—that was a joy with the dry bread and the waning shillings. They were poor stuff, but I could not write the like now—time

has dried the sentiment out of me—and I sent the paper to Lucy, hoping she might know the initials, and really began to fancy myself a poet. The shilling was going fast nevertheless, and what was to be done? I might have borrowed—Johnson himself would have lent me; but in those scrupulous times I saw no prospect of paying, and after another vain application—it was for a daily tutorship in a family of five boys and six girls; they kept no governess and wanted testimonials—I resolved to pawn all the remaining clothes and trifles I could spare and go to London, where so many poor youths had made their fortune, and nobody would know how I lived or what became of me.

By the way, it had been a great adventure—my first visit to the Three Golden Balls. I am sure the pawnbroker must have thought the articles were stolen: I went home through the rain and sleet with the feelings of a young offender on his first conviction, and was haunted all night by a vision of Mrs. Glass and her son reading the pawn tickets aloud at each side of my bed, while all the Fentons looked in at the narrow window. I had grown used to such small affairs now, and came to the aforesaid resolution just as I entered Crown Alley in the cold misty twilight; but William, the widow's son, met me within a few steps of the door and whispered, "Mr. Favoursham, there's a man—not a gentleman you know—awaiting for you this

hour in mother's shop." Much astonished that anybody that was not a gentleman could be waiting for me, I entered and saw seated in the one chair in front of the counter, a little man of that peculiar figure which looks as if a not very well filled sack had somehow got legs. His hair was a dim red, his complexion a dim fair; he had small deep-set eyes, prominent cheek-bones; he wore no whiskers, but that was not uncommon at the time; he had a look of respectability, but in a humble station. I had certainly seen him before, and when he spoke his northern accent brought him to my remembrance as Davy Lawson, the gardener, land-steward, and factotum general at Oak Park. If anybody on earth enjoyed Mr. Rollinson's confidence it was believed to be Davy. He had come with him from Scotland in the capacity of gardener, from which he had risen to his present importance, not by the usual steps of promotion, but the more convenient process of annexing one office to another. Some said he was a poor relation of the lady, who at times became invisible, and had therefore been raised to power and trust; some that he had abandoned the Scottish Covenant for Independency; but all agreed that old Rollinson found in him an honest and exemplary steward. Davy was not young, but I cannot tell his age. He seemed to have no relations and had never married, though the best of the tenants' daughters were said to have laid snares for his feet, the man having saved

money; but he managed all the private and public business of Oak Park; and if his humility did not descend quite as far as that of Mr. Temple in the Fenton household, he had a quiet, sensible way of talking, and even of shuffling about, for that was the fashion of his walk, and served the family faithfully, soberly, and with great respect.

"I am happy to see you well, Master Frederic," said he, rising as I entered; "Mr. Rollinson's compliments, and he will be glad to see you at nine o'clock to-morrow on a little business."

That message worked up my mind like yeast. What could the little business be? Mr. Rollinson's notice had formerly made me great among my kindred—now it was more valuable than ever—so I shook hands with Davy on the spot, assured him I was delighted to see him looking so well, inquired earnestly for the Oak Park family, especially Master Richard Mackenzie, and requested him to give my best regards to Mr. Rollinson, and say, "I should do myself the honor of waiting upon him at the hour appointed."

Davy responded in his prudent Scottish fashion, "that he was thankful to say the family were all well;" and I thought the ghost of a smile passed over his face when he added, "that Master Richard Mackenzie had taken wonderfully to learning, and would be a by-ordinary boy."

It was with my best clothes and best manners on, that I repaired to Oak Park next morning.

I had slept little all the preceding night; partly with cold, for Mrs. Glass's blankets were thin; partly with expectation; and my heart beat loudly when the serious footman showed me into the library. There sat the terror of my childhood, with the Lime Street Lectures in his hand; and, notwithstanding Davy's thankfulness, I observed he was bowed and shaken, as if by recent sickness; the iron-grey hair was changing to a flaxen white; the bronze cheek had grown hollow; and the clear keen eye, which once kept me in such subjection, was getting dim, for he had on spectacles. The old man's manner was changed too, but it was for the better. He did not seem half so inclined to preach, and received me kindly, saying, "He was sorry to hear that I was out of a situation, and had thought of something that might suit me."

Before I could express my thanks, he proceeded—

"My son, Richard Mackenzie, is, I may say, a wonderful child: he has extraordinary gifts, and I hope graces—books, especially religious books, are his delight; he has mastered some of the deepest questions of theology, to the astonishment of all our ministers; but it hath pleased Divine Providence to give him a delicate constitution with these extraordinary talents. Common lessons and tasks would injure his health; and I want a sober, sensible, well-disposed young man to take charge of his education under my own direction—that is, you understand, to read to him, and in-

struct him by word of mouth, for we cannot put him to the drudgery of learning letters."

When Mr. Rollinson closed this recital with the statement that he would give fifty pounds a-year to the said instructor, who would always be treated like one of the family, and have a seat in their pew; when, moreover, he proposed to take me a quarter on trial, I felt my fortune already made, and saw the Fenton kindred bowing down before me. However, I suppressed the exultation of my mind by a great effort, looked as sober and sensible as I could, and said it would be a great pleasure to me to assist in Master Richard Mackenzie's education; that I hoped to make up in application what I wanted in ability, and that I was sincerely grateful for Mr. Rollinson's kind offer. I think my seriousness and humility pleased him, for he smiled more graciously than was his wont, said "he trusted his son and I would be blessings to each other," arranged that I was to take office on the following day, and dismissed me without saying a single word of my vanished master, though I had come prepared for a lecture against his wicked example.

All the rest of that day I spent in considering the best mode of imparting verbal instruction to Master Richard Mackenzie, in setting my traps in order, and in writing to the Roses that something better than the situation I expected had turned up, for Mr. Rollinson had offered me the tutorship of his son. Having made known my improved

prospects to Mrs. Glass also, I held high wassail on a steak and half a pint of porter, and debated with myself the propriety of borrowing five shillings from Johnson to redeem the gilt pin, etc., for taking pawn tickets with me to Oak Park was not to be contemplated for a moment. I felt sure the serious servants would smell them; and equally unfit for such a sphere seemed Lavance's packet. The prescribed month had expired; I had also allowed three days to elapse, by way of showing that I was trusty and not given to pry, but now I would open it and forward him his compromising papers before I entered on my grave and responsible office. Often had I looked at the packet, felt something hard within, and speculated on the secrets it might contain, in my leisure hours with Mr. Fenton, and my hungry ones with Mrs. Glass; but when I unfolded the envelope—a complete sheet of foolscap—there was nothing but a small French pocket-book I had seen with Lavance; it had a gilt border and a picture of the grace Euphrosyne, which I thought like Lucy; and behind that picture he had slipped a little note for me.

"My dear Freddy,—I must leave Manchester, and have not as much money to spare as I could wish. I know your master's affairs are going wrong, and cannot help him; but he will hold out for sometime. I would serve you if I could, so look in the right-hand pocket, and forgive, but don't forget, your friend, "Lavance."

"P.S.—A letter addressed to 13, Saville Row, London, will find me, though I will not be in England for sometime. My best regards to Lucy."

I looked in the right-hand pocket and saw two five-pound notes. There had not come many of the kind my way then, and had the opening taken place three days before, my feelings might have been different; but with the tutorship of Master Richard Mackenzie in my grasp, and a month's wondering and speculation in my memory, I threw them down with perfect disgust. Lavance had intrusted me with nothing after all: his mysterious packet was only a sly way of giving me money which perhaps he could not well spare. I had his address and would return it to him by the next post. Yet it was kindly done, and he had written my name in the pocket-book just beside Lucy's picture. Moreover I wanted funds to pay off "my uncle," to go to Oak Park like a gentleman, and to do the handsome by Mrs. Glass. Under these pressing considerations I gathered up the Bank paper, redeemed my pledges, paid the widow, wassail and all, with a gratuity, which the good woman could scarcely be persuaded to take, bought William a present of a new melting-pot for his wax, and ended by purchasing for myself a suit of serious brown befitting the gravity of Mr. Rollinson's pew, for my Sunday coat at that period was a rather lively green.

This was a tolerable amount of business to

transact in a winter day, but one gets through a great deal when the spirit is up at eighteen ; nor did I forget to send the news of my advancement home to the Fenton family, by imparting it to Mr. Temple, whom I met accidentally on the street. Last of all I wrote to Lavance, sincerely thanking him—for the money was serviceable, and had I opened the packet sooner it would have saved me some care and scarcity—telling him all that had happened since he left, to my master, to the Fentons, and to the Roses, together with my new dignity as tutor in Oak Park. Before starting for that serious mansion next morning, I took a condescending leave of Mrs. Glass and her son: good people, the unexpected change in my fortunes puzzled them to the end of their days. I also bid good-bye to Johnson, whom I found putting his garret in regulation: he told me that everything had been sold at low figures, that Gittens and Slatterly were going to law, and that my master's friends ought to do something for him, for he was nearly "dissolute"—the worthy man meant destitute—in London.

"What's his address, Johnson?" said I. "He was a kind master to me," and my gentility taking alarm I added, "It is a pity he was not wiser for himself."

"It is, Master Frederic," said Johnson; "but his address ain't over and above respectable—you won't mention it—23, Skittle Street, St. Giles's; and for insurance it might be as well to say 'the

two pair back:' he's among the Irish, Master Frederic—think of that."

"Dear me," said I, with an inward hope that Johnson knew nothing of the mother I still lamented—such are the wonders of respectability.

"Yes, Master Frederic, and not very well off for his rent either: that's what unregularities brings people to."

The above was Johnson's nominative for all kinds of transgression.

"But if you would speak to Mr. Rose or Miss Lucy—for there ain't no use in talking to old Fenton, and Mr. Rollinson is so uncommon religious—they might be got to do something."

I told Johnson in a tone of patronage that I would do all in my power, and found time the same evening to send most of what remained of Lavance's present to 23, Skittle Street, "from an unknown friend," for I knew how much against poor Harry's grain it would go to take the trifle from me.

When I rang at the gate of Oak Park the lodge clock was striking ten, a rather advanced hour in that early household. The young ladies had gone to the school, and everybody was at the business of the day. Mr. Rollinson received me with his former kindness, gave me another lecture on the delicate health and marvellous abilities of Master Richard Mackenzie, and took me for presentation to Mrs. Rollinson, where she sat in the back drawing-room over a large workbasket full

of many-colored worsteds, stitching away as if for a day's wages. It was the first time I had the honor of seeing the lady, my visits to Oak Park having always occurred at her invisible times. She was a large plain woman of the Scottish type, somewhat gaunt and bony, but with a deal of stiff dignity about her, and an air of old-fashioned gentility which reminded one that she was well descended, in spite of a vacant look and a strange oddity of manner.

"My dear," said Mr. Rollinson, introducing me, "here is the young man who is to teach Richard Mackenzie — Frederic Favoursham, my grand-nephew."

Oak Park had never before claimed me as a relative, and I felt the honor acutely.

"How do you do?" said Mrs. Rollinson, extending her three fingers. "I am glad to see you; take a seat, if you please."

And when I was seated she asked me a series of questions: If my mother was dead? If I knew what my father was doing? Had not I been brought up at Liverpool? How were my aunt and uncle getting on there? Had Harry Fenton been kind to me? was he very extravagant? and would he ever come back to Manchester? All which queries I answered to the best of my ability, though some of them were searching and proposed in that peculiarly dry tone which I have remarked as a frequent accompaniment of confusion in the upper story. My reply to her last interrogative,

concerning Mr. Fenton's future movements, being unsatisfactory, Mrs. Rollinson frowned and relapsed into silence, after repeating to herself several times, "You don't know, dear me, you don't know:" and Mr. Rollinson, who had exemplified the power of habit, by sitting composed and attentive as though it had been the Catechism, rose and conducted me to Master Richard Mackenzie's room, "which he had not left that week because his head was bad." It was situated at the top of a private staircase leading from a passage hard by the library door. The hangings were dark green damask, the paper and carpet of correspondingly sober patterns; there were two windows looking out on a plantation of firs, with the low lands of Lancashire faintly seen beyond them; a black marble mantelpiece, ornamented with a portrait of Calvin, and an old Spanish timepiece embellished with a death's-head and a Latin motto, setting forth that time brought the fairest to that fashion. There were also three large mahogany bookcases filled with heavy volumes bound in Dutch leather; every description of scientific toy or learned plaything, on which time and money were spent in those days, filled the corners, the tables, and the shelves of that apartment; there were mathematical cards and geographical puzzles; there were magnetic dogs, steamboats, and solar systems. Sally, whom I had before seen, sat close by the fire with a large book which she had been reading aloud—it

was Boston's Fourfold State—and beside her, on a low easy chair, sat Master Richard Mackenzie, in a plaid dressing-gown and black velvet skull-cap, looking so grave, so infirm, and so aged that I could scarcely persuade myself he was not twenty years older than his father.

CHAPTER XI.

Nay, I relate no wonders, my good lord,
But that which I have seen in life's by-ways,
The odd unstoried corners of the world,
Which those who tell of camps and courts forget,
And yet be sure they have their history.
—*The New Year's Guest.*

I SUPPOSE that all kinds of grandeur must be paid for, and it was so with my promotion to instruct the heir of Oak Park. When I stood in that dingy room, with so many evidences of money in it, and heard my pupil say, in a shrill querulous tone, "Sally, why don't you read on? who's that coming to disturb me now?" and the little old gentleman did not take the trouble to look round —I felt the gloom and oddity of the great house fall on me, and could have wished myself safe back in Mrs Glass's room, "where she never knowed of anybody as had a fire."

"Richard Mackenzie, my dear," said Mr. Rollinson, looking with parental pride, first on the velvet skull-cap and then on the volume in Sally's lap; "here's Frederic Favoursham, of whom we talked so often; he will read to you far better than Sally, and be very kind, I'm sure."

He glanced at me; and having some idea of my duty, I stepped forward, took the little shrivelled

hand, and said everything I could think of to propitiate Richard Mackenzie, who responded,

"Oh yes, I'm very glad you're come, and we'll be very good friends if you tell me everything, and read good books to me, and never ask me to learn those nasty letters and horrid spelling; they're good for nothing, but just a waste of time."

"He's a wonderful child, Frederic," said Mr. Rollinson; "and what he has just mentioned is the chief difficulty we have to contend with in his education. Richard Mackenzie's mind is of a highly intellectual and speculative cast—it dives into the deepest mysteries, and soars, I may say, to the loftiest themes; but he hates the mechanical drudgery of learning—primers and spelling-books are his aversion. You can't understand what a piece of work it is to get him to the horn-book; in fact, I can't say that he has mastered the alphabet now;" and Mr. Rollinson's tone rose higher, for the earlier portion of his discourse was supposed to have been aside. "I wish my son to learn to read and write creditably, and also the Latin Grammar—it is necessary, you know, for a young gentleman; and I am sure Richard Mackenzie knows it is his duty to obey his father."

"There are two sorts of obedience," said Richard Mackenzie, as he crossed his arms, shut his eyes, and rocked to and fro in the easy chair; "two sorts of obedience, active and passive; it is not clear to which of them I'm called; but I would rather hear about eternal punishment—Sally was

reading that when you came and disturbed me."

"Never mind Sally," said Mr. Rollinson; "Frederic will read to you; come, like a good boy, and show him your favourite books."

"He can see them for himself in the cases there," said Richard, rocking away; and see them I did with unfeigned amazement, for a more unique collection of volumes was never gathered together in a juvenile library. The deepest divines known to English Dissenters were there, represented by their most abstruse works. There was Weatherspoon on Predestination, Flavel on Original Sin, Willson on the Covenant of Works, and Durham on the Revelations; with sundry others of equal depth and weight, relieved by such light literature as Foxe's Martyrology, the History of the Ten General Persecutions, and the Inquisition Displayed.

"They are all of his own choosing," said Mr. Rollinson, in a kind of spiritual triumph; "no stories or picture books for him—he despises them; and as for the hymns and verses which please other children so much, Richard Mackenzie would not waste his time with the like, though he can learn anything—such a memory, Frederic! He can repeat the heads of any sermon on first hearing, that is, if there be some depth of doctrine in it; he has the Larger and Shorter Catechisms by heart, with all the proofs; he is going over the Westminster Confession, and talks of committing

the whole of Cruden's Concordance to memory. Frederic, he is a wonderful child, you'll observe that more every day; if his health were not so delicate, I might expect to see him a shining divine; in fact"—and the proud father laid his hand confidentially on my shoulder, we were growing quite familiar—"he is composing a tract on the Fall of Man, which may be printed sooner than people think. If he could only be induced to learn his letters—but it makes his head bad," said Mr. Rollinson, with a half sigh.

The subject of his eulogy meantime continued to rock on the easy chair, letting fall occasional observations, whose tenor evinced that his mind was occupied with the engaging theme on which Sally had been reading. Now, however, he roused himself from his pleasing reverie, exclaiming,

"Why is not somebody reading to me, or doing something? We should always be improving time, for time flies quickly; and after time comes eternity."

"Ah, my son knows the value of time," said his father, as I started at the queer shrill tone, which always reminded me irresistibly of Punch and Judy; "we all endeavour to remember that. You have not been accustomed to think of it, I am afraid, Frederic; but you will find no time lost in this house. We rise at six, breakfast at seven, have prayers at eight, lunch at one, dinner at five, tea at seven, prayers at eight, and supper immediately after. Our hours are the same, summer and winter,

for duty is the same in all seasons. I have the rules of the house printed, and will give you a copy to keep in your own room."

Mr. Rollinson was great in worldly wisdom: he had made money, never mind how; he had kept it moreover, and laid it out to advantage. There were few in Manchester whom he could not advise regarding investments, securities, and the general conduct of business; but the world of mind was an unknown realm to him—for it he had neither chart nor compass. His estate was purchased, his distinguished connexion was formed, with its heavy balance weight; yet another glory was wanting, and that was to be made up by his son's gifts and graces, in which the old man's belief half shocked and half entertained me. I suppose the heir of Oak Park ought not to be called unlucky, but he was a remarkable specimen of unsoundness. His curved spine and diminutive stature, together with the family mode of speaking of the "wonderful child," had led me to believe he was very young, though other signs of youth or childhood there were none about him; but Davy Lawson afterwards assured me that Master Richard Mackenzie was in his fifteenth year. They had tried many tutors, but none of them could ever teach him to read, nor even to know the alphabet. All his knowledge had been gained through the ear, and it was of an extraordinary description. Nature, the Fates, and the Calvinistic books and preachers who ruled over his father's rich and penitential

days, had conspired to make him a living *resumé* of all the dry and unreasonable divinity that ever was preached or printed since the Reformation. On this and all kindred subjects his powers of acquisition and retention were tremendous. I have heard him repeat whole volumes of controversy regarding the Divine decrees, foreknowledge, and omnipotence; and though he never could be taught to spell words of one syllable on the primer, the longest and most Latinized terms of old theology were no trouble to him. For hard and disagreeable doctrines, Master Richard Mackenzie had a peculiar relish. He was a great enemy to free-will, and a powerful denouncer of good works; but the depravity of man's whole nature, the goings about of Satan like a roaring lion, the complete and final condemnation of all who did not believe in the "Westminster Confession," whether they had ever heard of it or not, and, above all, eternal election and reprobation, were themes on which he expatiated with the taste and pleasure of a connoisseur. Whether or not the soul understood what he was saying I could never be certain. It is probable that he comprehended it about as well as most of those who have talked and written on such matters; but it was a fearful burlesque on creeds and controversies to hear the shrill childish voice out of that easy chair, where I always thought he discoursed with most energy, laying down the law concerning foreordination, the covenant of grace, and everlasting destruc-

tion. He had a striking taste for horrors too: there was nothing dreadful or ingenious in all the details of martyrology that he did not know and remember, as it seemed by instinct; and used to amuse his leisure—that is to say, when some one was not reading his favourite authors to him, for Master Richard Mackenzie never played—by repeating to himself such agreeable episodes of human history as the martyrdom of St. Lawrence, the seven sons of Andronicus, and the most memorable doings of the Inquisition in Spain.

Having said so much of my pupil, it may be proper to tell something of my situation, as I found it; and here there was taught to me my first and most curious lesson regarding successful appearances. I know that the Fentons were astonished at my promotion; the news struck George dumb for full five minutes, and then he said, "Frederic must be clever to do that;" the old monarch said I might get on if I pleased the Oak Park people, but that was not easy; and Mrs. William, who had always wished to have her boys taken notice of at the great house, sent me a letter of congratulation and advice, with many pious expressions interspersed, which I, in the malice of my mind, took care that none of the Rollinsons should see, by putting it quietly into the fire. The same day brought me a shorter and more sincere one from Mr. Rose, containing no advice, "but to be a good boy, and come down at Christmas," and enclosing notes from Robert and

Lucy. Everybody thought I had put on my right foot shoe, but they did not know how it pinched, and my pride resolved they should not. Of the many who had preceded me in the conduct of Master Richard Mackenzie's education, no tutor, even though he came from Scotland, had ever been known to remain more than six months; nor would the fact have seemed marvellous had it been communicated to me on the sixth day of my residence at Oak Park. The stately mansion, with its lawn and lodge, park and gardens, which I had so often contemplated in admiring awe from the window of my bedroom in the "genteel boarding-house," was one of the queerest and dreariest dwellings in which it was ever my lot to abide. Its meals and prayers were regulated according to the rules Mr. Rollinson had expounded. A printed copy of them was suspended behind the dressing-glass in my room, which was furnished with every comfort, and, I am sorry to say, opened off that of my interesting pupil. He had a complete suite of apartments, consisting of the sitting-room I have described—it was called his study—a bed-chamber, on which no expense had been spared, a closet for Sally, and the aforesaid room for me. His mother had another suite somewhere far back on the second floor; and there was a stout hard-faced woman, entitled Mrs. McCall, who went through the house knitting red woollen night-caps when she was not in attendance there. In these peaceful times Mrs. Rollinson came to breakfast and to prayers, after

which she retired to her work-basket in the back drawing-room. Mr. Rollinson divided his time, with great impartiality, between his son and the library, where he kept accounts, saw Davy Lawson, and read serious books—that is, when his health permitted, for the stiff constitution which had stood the Middle Passage, and more kinds of wear and tear than I can tell, was breaking down amid his wealth and domestic comforts: it came out with himself one day at the end of a sermon—for he preached some still—that he had only just recovered from a small attack of paralysis when he heard of Harry Fenton's failure, and thought of making me tutor. As for the young ladies, their lives and energies were offered up to schools and classes connected with the Independent Chapel, which temple Mr. Rollinson delighted to honor with his presence; and its minister was the Rev. — Riddle, still remembered among the Dissenters of Manchester for his awakening sermons and the world of good he was believed to do in the town. In the latter department, the Misses Rollinson were his chief assistants. They attended Bible Classes at six in the morning, and came home from catechisings at ten p.m. They visited, they examined, they distributed no end of tracts, hymn books, and little cards with texts on them. All the week they taught a school of their own, to which it required unslumbering vigilance to make the tenantry send their children; and another on Sunday evenings for the factory boys, where those

who were not of the Rollinson mills threw hard peas about and sang "Cherry ripe," the street song of the period, which had come down with mail coaches and travellers from London, where Madame Vestris, then young and new, made it popular from the boards of Covent Garden. I have adverted to the general appearance of the fair trio when they came for portraits to Mr. Fenton's painting-room, and will now add only that they were three plain odd girls, with an abrupt ungraceful manner acquired in catechising, and a great opinion of themselves and Oak Park. They never paid me the slightest attention, which may account for the severity of my remarks; indeed I never heard them talk of anything but Mr. Riddle, and what they denominated "the work;" but there was one peculiarity about them worth noting: though accustomed to the said "work" for some years, and all three supplied with watches, they never could get ready in time, and the school or class-hours were always a succession of scurries, which resounded through the great dull house, breaking its silence as sudden squalls break the lifeless calm of tropical seas. These were not the only interruptions of its quiet: as the moon drew nearer her perfect circle, whether shining or hidden by the wintry clouds, poor Mrs. Rollinson's brain became disturbed. She was seen no longer in the back drawing-room, at meals or at prayers, but screams, generally concerning the Pope, the Jesuits, and the Gunpowder Plot, were heard at intervals

from those far-back rooms on the second floor where Mrs. McCall officiated—the poor lady's mind having taken to these subjects because both papers and Parliament were then busy with the din of Catholic Emancipation: and I think her fervour increased after my coming, for somebody had been unlucky enough to tell her that my mother was a Catholic. When I got accustomed to those passing storms, they really seemed to give our in-door life variety; and it was much wanted. I have already mentioned that the servants were all serious—most of them had come from Scotland, and saved money in the service: the beer of that house was strong, and the wages good—everybody was well provided for; but there was no fun in either kitchen or scullery, and they went about their business as silently as so many lay brothers of La Trappe, doing for those provident monks who dig their own graves. The household affairs were managed by a sister of Mrs. McCall—her name was McCrackin—and she performed her solemn duties in widow's weeds, was particularly given to remind people "of their latter end," and used to groan through the passages when things were not to her liking.

It was a dreadful business, the reading of those old theological books; and Master Richard's friends, the martyrs, inspired me with a hatred of that distinguished order, which, to my shame be it spoken, is not utterly effaced. They, together with his chosen divines, who enlarged on the place of

punishment, made my nights terrible with dreams for the first few months; but in time I grew used to all sorts of horrors, and could have slept comfortably after Nero's transactions with the early Christians, or Bunyan's "Terrors to Come."

In the early days of our acquaintance, I made some futile attempts to divert his studies to a more agreeable channel, and actually endeavoured to seduce him into "Jack the Giant Killer;" but my young master's mind was too firmly fixed on his chosen themes, and he read me such a lecture on the sinfulness of losing time with vain and frivolous books, and the consequences to be looked for in the other world, that I was fain to give up the experiment.

There was little company seen at Oak Park. The Rev. Riddle and his spouse, together with his six grown-up daughters and two sons, were invited to dine once a month while Mrs. Rollinson was visible; and the sum of my recollections concerning them is that they were all fat, rather good-humoured, and not well dressed; their conversation, and I suppose their thoughts, circled round the chapel, never moving a mile from that centre, and they all liked plum-pudding, for which I once heard Master Richard solemnly rebuke them, reminding his reverend pastor that "the fattest of the Israelites were slain in the wilderness." There were also young aspirants to the Independent ministry occasionally brought home on Sundays. They talked of the "work"

with the three Misses Rollinson, and generally inserted r's in the room of all vowels. Missionaries connected with the chapel were asked to tea as sure as they entered Manchester; so were Scripture Readers, Sunday School Teachers, and wicked factory men "who had seen the evil of their ways." From this *resumé* it will be seen that our society was not over gay; and many a time during my abode in that well-appointed mansion I would have given not only my present but future chances of fortune, as they then appeared, for a day in Harry Fenton's painting-room. It was a dull and a dreary sojourn, but there were gilding circumstances, such as lend a gloss sometimes to higher and darker places of life. I was treated like one of the family, sat with them at table among the aforesaid sprightly company, had a seat regularly assigned me in their pew—from which, by the way, there was no supposition of my possible absence, for chapel was one of the first necessities of that household; Mrs. Rollinson went there at times in charge of Mrs. McCall, and had to be taken home in the midst of the morning lecture. Besides, I was great and glorious in the eyes of all the Fentons. The old king would stop to shake hands with me in the street; Mrs. William said "she hoped her boys would take example from their cousin Frederic;" George had got coldly reconciled to me; Mr. Temple showed me great respect; his idol patronized me in her most condescending manner—

I thought Mary Ann, be it remembered she was the prettiest of the Misses Fenton, took more than usual notice of me—and I had a general invitation to the old china whenever I could find time. I found very little to spend that way, but made flying calls occasionally to show forth my grandeur and business; moved in the proud consciousness of earning my own living, which alone made the deadly dulness of Oak Park, the thrall of Master Richard Mackenzie, and the study of his favourite literature endurable, and which, in spite of something handsome in the Five per Cents., I am still vulgar enough to respect in anybody. Moreover, I had holidays, though they were few and far between. The Christmas holly did not come into that house, Mrs. Rollinson was accustomed to denounce it mightily as a remnant of Popish idolatry. I don't think they fasted on the 25th of December, after the manner of their sect, when the Long Parliament lifted it to power; but I know there were no mince pies made; and Mr. Rollinson gave me leave to go down with my friend Robert to Rosebank while himself officiated among the old divines and martyrs.

That was, as Holinshed the chronicler would say, "a most gladsome yule, kept with great merriness." I think its like never lighted up my winters—the snow was deep and the fog heavy, but neither had got the length of my heart then; and it stands high and clear out of the dull sur-

rounding days, the first of my pride and the last of my pleasure. I had been at Rosebank in Christmas times before, and danced with Lucy under the holly berries; but then many small circumstances, and George Fenton occasionally, gave me to understand that I was nobody. Now I came as one having a prospect—no longer "Mr. Fenton's boy, but young Mr. Favoursham, the tutor at Oak Park, who must be clever, and very steady for his years, because the rich Mr. Rollinson, his grand-uncle, had intrusted him with the education of his only son and heir."

It was late when Robert and I arrived—the Derby mail had been three hours and a half beyond its time, on account of the snow; by the way, the old Express was gone from the road, and Robert told me they had made something of it for the workhouse. The chaise we ordered at the Silver Unicorn got slowly over the country road; and all the way I saw there was something in Robert's mind very difficult of suppression, though he talked a good deal about the Fentons, how rich they were getting, what a hard crust the old man was, and none but George and Mary Ann were to come down that Christmas. I looked at Robert as he mentioned the latter name, with a kindling hope in my heart that the secret might be the turning of his mind to that young lady. I knew he had been my rival—first in the field, and Mr. Rose's nephew—but Mary Ann had always shown him a preference. I think that girl was inclined

to flirt in a small dissenting way; and who knew but Robert and I might keep our friendship, and help each other in our separate endeavours, which would cross nobody but the old folks. The guesses that begin near home are always sure of failure. I had not got my hair fairly brushed—it was an arduous undertaking to make it look like wavy curls that evening—and received the kind warm welcome of Mr. Rose and the always gentle greeting of Lucy, when my eye was caught by a face scarce less friendly, though he did look slightly embarrassed, and my hand was clasped in the large moist one of Harry Fenton, my half-forgotten master, with, "Freddy, my boy, I'm glad to see you: did you expect to find me here?"

I assured him I did not; and old Rose and Robert made the room ring with laughter at my surprise, and mutual congratulations on "how well they had managed it." George did not at all seem to enjoy the fun, though he tried to take it with a good grace; but the painter appeared quite amused; and when the first small confusion of our meeting was over, inquired, with great ease of mind, how I liked my situation, what Johnson was doing, and how all his acquaintances got on in Manchester. It was pleasant to see him back among his friends again. I had grown magnanimous with my prosperity, and could afford to forgive his desertion, though I felt the painting-room was not to be re-established, and stood above being his boy now. Robert disclosed to me, in one

of our quiet talks, that he had written them very sad letters from London, whereon Lucy coaxed her grandfather to bring him down and see what could be done for him, as there was no portrait painter in Derby.

"She's a wonderful deep thinker," said Robert; "but nobody knows the work I had to get the Fentons brought round, and you see none of them would come but George and Mary Ann. Freddy, he's the best of them. I heard him offer to half set up his brother with his own earnings in a new painting-room, and give him another chance, but the old flint said 'he might get up the other half by subscriptions, and his name would not be on the list.' Notwithstanding this paternal encouragement, a sort of smoothing was made of Harry Fenton's affairs: his creditors were partly promised, partly paid off by a family subscription, that amendment on the old king of Hanover Street's motion being carried unanimously, though I know not who proposed it; and it is but justice to his memory to state that, as on all similar occasions, he stood firm to his word and did not contribute a single farthing."

Being now recognized as a cousin, I had the pleasure of casting in my mite—a poor acknowledgment for all the painter's kindness. Mr. Rollinson would not hear of me giving the whole of my first quarter's salary, but he came down handsomely himself; George, I believe, did all he could; Mrs. William was not pleased with the

"drudge for giving so much away from her poor boys;" and the Roses were a house of defence to my quondam master. Neither his funds nor his friends allowed of returning to Manchester; and, as I have said, the painting-room was never re-opened—a rising sculptor, who did the busts of town-councillors and dissenting ministers, made a studio of it; but a music-mistress in Derby agreed, for a small consideration, to let Mr. Fenton have her parlour when the pupils were gone. He called that place his chambers, and went occasionally to look after sitters. Some came, for the fame of his portraits stood high in Lancashire, and had spread into the neighbouring counties. Orders were also received for him in Hanover Street; his step-mother canvassed for sitters in her own orderly way; he had even permission to come before the monarch of mills sometimes; and I think Mrs. William asked him to the smallest of her parties; but his head-quarters were Rosebank, where he was said to give Lucy lessons in drawing. Thus half in light and half in shadow, this stray, and not lucky, branch of our family tree passed some further time, with many relapses and many reformations—one of the strongest of the latter was upon him that Christmas, for, as far as I remember, he had joined the temperance movement, then fresh from America, and the newest thing in London.

To proceed with my own tale. I thought Lucy should have taken more notice of the change in

my position, but she did not. Her welcome was as kind and free as ever; she danced and talked with me as she had always done; we wondered what had become of Lavance together, and when he would come back; we had our old games with Sport and Speed; but the girl was growing older, and so was I. We were both getting into the man and woman's world, yet I think that fact told on me more than on Lucy. There was something in her pure and gentle nature not for time to change. The transition from childhood to youth, from girl to woman's time, was less marked than one finds them in every day young ladies. From when I first saw her, Lucy grew an inch or so taller; her hair took a darker tinge, and, I think, her figure expanded; but her manner had still the same winning grace, her face the same frank but soft expression. Simple pleasures still charmed her; the wild flowers and fairy tales of the world were still her delight. She had smiles for her friends, she had tears for romances, she had sympathy and help for all who needed them; and, had she come to the time of grey hairs, Lucy would not have altered.

I had laid up a stock of poetry, and practised elocution while Master Richard slept—now I recited to Lucy in her porch-parlour. Is it the indissoluble kindred of love and poetry that makes every man so affected, get up verses to recite before his chosen? for, young or old, I never knew one who did not practise it. I had found out the

botanical names of her flowers, printed them with my pen on small cards, and labelled half the garden, thereby getting great praise for my scholarship. I had rubbed up my French, and could exchange a few phrases, which I called conversing, with Lucy in that language, as I fancied, to the envy and down-setting of George Fenton. He had learned to make himself far more agreeable, however, and always joined us in our garden and orchard rambles; though I remarked that Lucy's grandfather had grown very much afraid of her catching cold. Perhaps that was natural in the frost and snow. George had brought Lucy a handsome shawl too—I think the ladies called it camel's hair—which seemed to me making an old woman of her; but Lucy liked it, and was merry and kind with us all. Robert went about as usual, proud of Rosebank, always looking after his fair cousin, and a good fellow to everybody; yet somehow my dream concerning Mary Ann seemed far enough from fulfilment; and though he had found out that George was the best of the Fentons, that steady young man seemed by no means rising in his private esteem. So we all spent our Christmas, my old master being the soberest, but he had returned from the husks; my holidays expired with the dawn of another year, and I went home to Calvin, Foxe, and the rest of Master Richard's friends.

CHAPTER XII.

Was there a time when fear and jealousy
Walked not with love—when fortune did not lay
Snares for men's souls—nor life was leaguered so
By that great host of many-colored cares
Which make our wisdom bootless as our prayers?
Stranger, methinks it must be long ago,
For since the muse of story found her pen
Those tyrants waste the homes and hearts of men.
—*The Hermit of the Woods.*

When the London porter informed Peter the Great that they were all Czars in England, he proclaimed a fact of national character, to which the attention of historians has not been sufficiently directed. In farms and in warehouses, in homes and in public offices, where will you find so many autocrats in their own right, every one ready to rule with a rod of iron as far as the Czar, his next neighbour, will allow? Perhaps it is this universal leaven of absolutism lying deep in the heart of the land which makes arbitrary monarchy a thing abhorrent to the popular mind, and secures the glorious constitution with all its encumbrances; perhaps, too, it was a sprinkling of the same in my own nature which made me inwardly indignant that George Fenton should presume to stay longer than I did, and wonder his father had not ordered him home to the factory. Stay he did,

however. I am sure Robert did not want him—the poor fellow had his winter cough still; but he walked a long way beyond the bridge in that clear frosty morning—it was the 2nd of January—chatting with me and Harry Fenton, who had volunteered a walk "of a mile or so with Frederic," while the gig went on before. Our talk was all about Lucy—how well she looked, how fond her grandfather was of her, and how she never could be spared out of Rosebank. I had never parted with her in higher spirits: she gave me a bunch of winter flowers to divide among the Misses Rollinson, "and the lady of my heart was to get the largest share." I sent her back a message with Robert, to the effect that it was a pity to spend flowers on them, at which he laughed, till a great fit of coughing came on; and then bade me good-bye, with a fear "that his Latin must stand over that winter."

"A sore cough that boy has," said Mr. Fenton, who still walked on with me, intent on a little private discourse. "Old Rose has set his mind on making a match between him and Lucy, but I don't think he'll carry that point. Frederic, I never saw a match of old people's planning that something did not come in the way."

I knew that my *ci-devant* master had a great deal of old Rose's confidence. I had also guessed something of the matter he had broached; but this open announcement startled me, and brought the blood flushing up to my brow. Mr. Fenton

observed the fact, though I did not think so, but stammered out—

"Dear me, is that really true, sir?"

"It is indeed, Frederic," said he, looking me keenly in the face; "but it is natural the old man should wish Lucy to marry Robert: he is his nephew and heir-at-law, for Rosebank descends in the male line. Lucy has no fortune, but one thousand pounds that was sent from her mother's relations in France. Nobody knows how, for the London banker said he was bound in honor never to tell that secret. No poor struggling young man could think of such a girl, except he had substantial prospects, you know; but if she makes anything like a decent choice, I don't think her grandfather would be hard, after the warning he had by his son's business."

"What sort of a warning was it, Mr. Fenton?" said I, my embarrassment vanishing before the great opportunity, for there was the thread of history I had long sought after, and Fenton was evidently in one of those communicative moods which I observed to be more full and frequent in his days of humiliation.

"I thought you had heard it, Freddy," said he; "but no, you were too young, and your aunt and uncle talk of nothing out of Bridge Street, I suppose. Mr. Rose's son, my own cousin-german, and your second cousin, Freddy, the heir of Rosebank, you know, for the old man never had a child but him: his name was Percy; you see his picture

in the oak parlour yonder—a fine young man, but not very clever—the world could not have made a painter of him—and he was not over-sensible either. Mr. Rose gave him a first-rate education —sent him first to Eton and then to Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated in my second session, for Percy was three years older than me. Your poor father was our fellow-student: we were all great chums, but there was one with whom Percy kept closer. At his first school in Derby, he had struck up a friendship with the son of a French emigrant, who lived there, and wove silk stockings. They called him "Old Jacques:" he was a red-hot Republican, and had a terrible temper; but he wove good stockings, his daughter Florine sewed them up, and Constantine, that was the boy's name—by-the-bye, I think he was not Jacques' son, but an orphan left to his care by some friend or relation. At any rate, he was a wonderfully clever creature, and would do anything for learning. I never knew how he got the money to go to Cambridge, but he did, and carried all before him in the classes. He was not my style, and I knew little of him; but Percy went with Constantine hand and glove—hand and heart I ought to say—and they were never separate at school or college. It was a great chance for the boy to get so intimate with the son of a country gentleman, considering his own connexions; but the French blood can never keep steady. Constantine threw that chance, and every prospect of

well-doing, away. It is but fair to say that everybody liked him; he was popular, for old Jacques and himself too; but the man was not a fiercer politician than the boy, and, unluckily, they took different sides. It was the time of the war, Freddy, and the news of the great battles waking us up every week. I don't want to abuse parties that are down, and I don't see any use in calling names; but there was a usurper then on the throne of France, and that boy's head was turned with what he called his glory. Freddy, that all came of reading newspapers—a bad business for young people," and Mr. Fenton glanced moralizingly at me. "Percy Rose told me all about it; but, to make the story short, there came to be no peace between old Jacques and Constantine. Percy could never make out what they were at, except that the old man discoursed about false tyrants trampling down liberty, and the boy was evermore raving about fame and genius; but at last—I suppose they had a grand quarrel—Constantine ran away—he was not seventeen at the time—and the only news of him the old man heard was that he had joined the Grand Army on its march to Russia, and perished in the fearful crossing of the Berezina. That intelligence was given him by an officer of Constantine's regiment, who had been taken prisoner at Toulouse, and came on his parole to Derby. He said, too, that the boy had been promoted for taking a Russian standard somewhere on the Moskwa; but old Jacques grew quiet and sober in

his ways after hearing it, and never got into such broils about politics, though he held on a stiff Republican to the end of his days. I have seen Percy crying for Constantine Le Rout—that was the family name—as if he had been his brother. Percy had got acquainted with him first, and then, as was but natural, with Florine. She was a pretty girl—sensible and good too, considering that she was French—and Percy's heart was taken. Constantine had no hand in that business—it was not right begun till after his departure—and the story went that there had been an early engagement between him and Florine. I never heard how they carried on the courtship—old Jacques knew as little of it as Mr. Rose, though Percy used to go openly to the house sometimes, making believe to look after stockings and what-not—young people will find so many ways of going to their own ruin: in short, nobody guessed what was going on till one fine morning the pair started for Scotland in a chaise and four, and got married, as many foolish couples did before them, at Gretna Green. Frederic, my boy, you are growing up now"—and Mr. Fenton gave me a glance of measurement from head to foot—"remember there is nothing ruins a man like an imprudent marriage. I kept clear of that, and I hope you will have sense enough to follow my example; but to finish my story. There never was such a to-do in Derbyshire. It was the only hard turn ever my uncle was known to take. Nobody could expect that a

gentleman with his family and principles would put up with his son marrying a Frenchwoman, the daughter of a stocking-weaver too—an old Republican sinner, who might have been managing the guillotine for aught we knew; but, I must say, he was hard on poor Percy. He wrote to him in a manner casting him off, and would hear nothing that friends or neighbours could say for him. The boy had some pride and little sense; he never tried to make up matters, but lived by getting money from Jews on the estate he was to inherit—learned no good among them, and had to fly to the Continent for debt and danger soon after the general peace. I am sorry to tell you all this, Frederic, about my own cousin, and a gentleman's son—you see I am not the worst of the family, much as they make of my difficulties—but you know we are all relations, and there's no use in talking of it except between ourselves."

I concurred in this prudent sentiment, and ventured to inquire after further particulars.

"Oh," responded Mr. Fenton, "he left Lucy, she was then a mere infant, and her poor mother, in Derby—for the last year or so they had been with old Jacques: he was seven times worse than my uncle at first, called his daughter all sorts of names for marrying one of the enemies of liberty—you understand Percy was a captain of the Derbyshire Militia, and though he did make a low match, my cousin always stood by sound principles. Some good people, who wanted to patch the matter

up, would have it that old Jacques was one of the exiled noblesse—which would have been better, of course—but the old fellow stood to it that he was no Count or Marquis, but a stocking-weaver of Lyons, whose father and grandfather had worked on the loom before him. He forgave Florine, however, before six months had elapsed, and took her and her child home, when Percy could not be heard of, for my cousin rather went astray in London, and, poor fellow, he never came back to them."

"What became of him, Mr. Fenton?" said I, for the painter paused at this point, and his face took the same queer frightened look that it did when Johnson told him of seeing Lavance at the storming of Hougoumont, as he said—

"Well, Freddy, he was killed in a quarrel at ——, one of the towns on the Rhine; I don't exactly know the circumstances, nobody ever speaks of it on account of Mr. Rose and Lucy, you know. He took her home when her poor mother died; she and old Jacques went within the same fortnight, and had worked together at the stockings up till their last Saturday. Mother and child would have been welcome at Rosebank after poor Percy's death; it made an old man of my uncle in a month, but neither Florine nor her father would hear of that. They said 'they had their loom, and wanted no proud Englishman's charity.' But Rose has been a good grandfather to Lucy; he has paid Percy's debts too—that's what makes him so bare of money;

and if she won't have Robert with the property you see, the girl must marry some rising young man, with prospects and friends to help him. Dear me, there's the gig waiting this half-hour; good morning, Freddy my boy, mind your duty, and always keep to good principles; you must come back to me when my new painting-room is opened in Derby. But, Freddy, did you hear of Lavance this long time?"

I said, "Not since he left us in Manchester."

"Well, Freddy," said Mr. Fenton solemnly, "I hope he's doing right, but you're better without him—he's not a safe companion; but never quarrel with him: that man would spill blood as fast as water," and, with a hasty shake-hands, the painter left me on my backward way to Oak Park.

In the midst of the martyrs and eternal decrees, my thoughts often reverted to the talk of that January morning. I knew now who Lucy's mother was, and why her parentage was kept so quiet at Rosebank, but part of the tale was still shrouded in mystery. "Though Mr. Fenton had never heard the circumstances," I could not help suspecting that he knew more than he cared to acknowledge regarding his cousin's death. It had taken place "at one of the towns on the Rhine." He and Lavance had become acquainted at Baden Baden, and his warnings against the latter—so often and so privately given—sounded very like a conscious dread of the silent witness

or doubtful accomplice. I had naturally a good opinion of Lavance; there was much about him I could not fathom, but what I did know of the man took my fancy, and it was not to be believed that he had art or part in the murder of Lucy's father. Whatever Harry Fenton's backslidings might have been, he was not like a man who had kindred blood on his hands; but my vision of him was beginning to grow distorted. He had roused the green-eyed monster in my breast that morning by sounding the trumpet of rivalry between me and his brother, and from the tenor of his discourse, it was manifest which side he meant to take in the strife. The necessity of position and prospects had never entered into my dream of Lucy; the ways and means had never crossed its light, the reckoning of household expenses never weighed it down. If I had got hold of a crown I would have laid it at her feet; as it was, I left my heart there. She was my grace, my goddess, whose dwelling was in the high place and temple of my thoughts, and had nothing to do with everyday wants and economics. Fenton's words, and perhaps my own coming nearer to the world and ways of men, disturbed the dream, but did not destroy it. I took to deep meditations on methods of making one's fortune in the shortest time; I forged excuses for writing to Lucy on every possible subject. "Was not I her cousin?" I pondered well the letters she sent me in return: they were always kind and pleasant. I took

every opportunity of showing my grandeur to the Fentons, and time slipped away as time always does from us and our fancies. The winter went, and the summer came; Robert's cough abated, and he came back to the Latin Grammar. Lucy and her grandfather did not come up that season, because the old gentleman was not so well; George kept on at the factory, and I seldom saw him,—thanks to Master Richard Mackenzie and the martyrs, amongst whom I acquitted myself so as to gain that young gentleman's entire approbation, and, consequently, golden opinions from Mr. Rollinson.

The burden which had borne down Harry Fenton's most flourishing reformation, pressed scarce less heavily on the proprietor of Oak Park; for differing as they did in position and character, in age and antecedents, life had brought both uncle and nephew to the same solitude. Connected with the great Mackenzies and the full moon,—blessed with three daughters, who did no end of good, and a son whose praise was in all the chapels;—with mill and mansion calling him master, a high standing in the religious world, and a grandly serious establishment, Mr. Rollinson was as lonely and companionless as ever my earlier master had been among his sitters and kindred. The past reproached the one for his losses, and the other for his gains. The world, as usual, reflected only on the profitless sinner,—for money keeps its value in every Christian

country; but the rich man had heavy work in compounding for the middle passage. It is curious, if not instructive, to remark the unity of warring creeds. Mr. Rollinson was a High Calvinist, and accustomed to denounce Popery, with all its penances, in a strain scarcely exceeded by his lady when the lunar influence grew strong; yet he did the scourge and hair-cloth business after his own fashion, in consideration of the Guinea trade, quite as efficiently as brother Giuseppo in his monastery at the foot of Vesuvius, making up for the carnivals and tarantellas of his youth. I have said the man was solitary in the midst of his great house and remarkable family. His daughters stood in considerable awe of him, but they thought and cared far more for the Rev. Riddle and the "work" which made them busy and important. His spouse, in her times of quietness, transferred to him the reverence which, at perturbed periods, she entertained for Mrs. McCall; and Master Richard Mackenzie regarded his father only as somebody who was to read and listen to him "when Frederic was out of the way."

Few young persons come into contact with men so situated without being taken into more or less confidence; and this, together with my dutiful attentions to his son, made my new master take kindly, though gradually, to me. I will admit that I lost no opportunity of cultivating his favor, for the tutorship at Oak Park was my great pro-

motion. My face was kept as sober as that of Davy Lawson himself; I took notes of the Rev. Riddle's sermons; I volunteered to teach in the Sunday School; and I made three clear copies of Master Richard's essay on the "Fall of Man," which was to be printed when it was complete, but there were seven divisions of the subject yet to come. I regret that my acquaintance with Independent theology is not sufficient to warrant my giving a critical opinion of that precocious work; but it seemed to me quite as intelligible as the most of Master Richard's models, and I praised it with all my might, thereby greatly raising the family's respect for my understanding. The old gentleman in particular set me high in his esteem. We had grown friendly, though not in Fenton's manner, for Mr. Rollinson was a different man, as my third winter among the martyrs wore away. His health was slowly but surely sinking; the east wind confined him to his room for weeks together; the library grew too cold for him, and his sight was growing too dim for the variety of gold spectacles he kept in store. I was generally deputed to read the morning and evening chapters, and often sent for to read him sermons when he could not sleep on Sunday nights. My work was constant and dreary. I knew he had been captain of a slave-ship, and could still remember how he terrified my childhood; but the old man was kind in his way, and as age and sickness grew upon him, I observed at times an expression of real and

bitter repentance in the hard bronze face. I pitied the rich man, for many troubles were crowding on his latter days. Among them I perceived that about this time he began to get letters roughly sealed, and written in a slovenly hand, which seemed to disturb him more than common; that he had consultations with Davy Lawson in consequence, used to spend hours writing replies, and occasionally enclosed half notes. He generally gave me strong warnings to avoid the sins of youth and lead a sober life, after those letters. Once I heard him say, in a private communication to Davy,

"He must on no account come here, but go to his mother; and if she does not remove immediately, tell her I'll stop the allowance."

Whoever this concerned, Mr. Rollinson must have believed that his good counsels were not thrown away on me; for one Sunday night, when I had finished a long sermon on the worthlessness of good works, and was getting up the steam to ask leave to go down to Rosebank next week, which happened to be the Christmas one, he said,

"Frederic, you have some gifts, and I hope graces: you are wise and steady, and I know by your reading you have a voice for the pulpit. I cannot be long in this world, and I should like to leave you with a profession: what do you think of your own fitness for the ministry? It is a calling not to be lightly undertaken; but for

the temporal part, I will pay all your expenses at College, and the like; and I have no doubt you will soon get a chapel."

Had my aunt Grizzle, had my uncle Gurney, had the Whittles or any inhabitant of Old Bridge Street, ever imagined that I should have the opportunity of being reckoned in the same category with the Rev. Blakemore Biggs, and the prospect of a chapel? Honest people, the possibility of such advancement never crossed them in their loftiest dreams of me; and, as fortune would have it, the fact never came to their knowledge. Indeed, my communications with my childhood's home and friends were neither frequent nor familiar. I had received two letters of advice to save money, since my coming to Oak Park—one from my aunt Grizzle and one from my cousin Ned, for that steady young man had reached the advising point in his turn, and I was aware of Mr. Rollinson's writing to them often since the disturbing epistles began to arrive; but what Old Bridge Street would think, and what the Fentons would say, naturally occurred to me as he made the munificent offer. I know not what the result would be if one wanted a profession now; but in my twentieth year I had some conscience and knew that neither nature nor Providence ever intended me for the pastoral office. Moreover, Dissenters were not liked at Rosebank; and my answer was prepared before Mr. Rollinson had finished:

"I was grateful for his good opinion and would never forget his kindness, but I felt myself unequal to the high calling of a minister, and could not undertake such weighty responsibilities."

"It is a safe thing to be doubtful of our own strength, Frederic," said Mr. Rollinson; "but I think you undervalue your gifts: look for higher direction." And he gave me a great deal of pious advice, which I partly forget and partly think it better taste not to record verbatim. Though the offer was not to my taste, I was grateful. It evinced a thoughtful care for my future which could hardly be expected from the austere old man, and my satisfaction was great when he added,

"Consider it well, Frederic: if you really decline the ministry from conscientious motives, law and medicine are open to you; but I had hoped to hear you preaching."

On what sort of a hearing that would have been I will not now hazard a conjecture; but I thanked Mr. Rollinson with all my heart, and felt myself becoming somebody in the world.

CHAPTER XIII.

They who of old built altars to thine honor,
And gave thee place among the gods, O Death,
Had wisdom in their worship. Thou art still
The breaker of all bonds and prison-houses—
The world's peacemaker, spite of creeds and claims—
The ever just divider, bringing men
From fortune's heights and poverty's deep places
Back to their ancient brotherhood of dust.

—*Count Ernest's Play.*

When Hafiz was about to be made Sultan of the diamond land, lord of the fountain of youth, and master of the seven Houries, he awoke, and behold it was a dream! Small samples of such waking occur in most men's experience; and I proceed to relate how my own vision of grandeur faded, and why I am not this day an ornament to the pulpit, the bar, or the medical profession. The east wind blew all next week, driving sleety clouds before it; Mr. Rollinson could not leave his room, Master Richard's head was bad, and Mrs. Rollinson was under the administration of Mrs. McCall. I had never much of the hireling spirit in me, and would not have asked for leave of absence in such an emergency—not to speak of my new bond to the service—so I wrote and explained everything to Mr. Rose, whose friendship had never slacked; bought a "Forget-me-Not"

for Lucy—that annual was in its zenith then; and took an opportunity of letting the Fentons know that I had my choice of any of the learned professions, when I went to Hanover Street to commit book and letters to the trusty hand of Robert. Poor fellow, his looks were not improving; and he said it was his belief he would never get to Cambridge, that Latin grammar was so hard, that he was sorry I could not come down, and Lucy would be sorry, for all the Fentons were going, even the old flint himself, to meet Harry; but, of course, it was all right. I was meditating on the rightness of it in no resigned mood, and plodding my homeward way through a muddy road and a drizzling rain by the last light of the December day, when, on approaching the Park-gate, I saw a tall, ill-dressed man standing close under the wall, as if waiting for somebody. He looked at me narrowly as I came near, seemed uncertain what to do for a minute, and then springing from his lurking place before I could pull the porter's bell, he threw his arms around my neck, exclaiming, in a considerable whine—

"My own dear darling cousin Frederic."

"Who are you?" said I, releasing myself as quickly as I could from the demonstrations of his affection, for the odour of stale tobacco about him was powerful.

"Don't you know your long-lost cousin Dick?" said he. "Oh, Frederic, how much I have wished and sighed to see you! I ran away from old

Wiggins, you know, because, in fact, he was harsh to me, and so was Ned; I have been trying a great many things, and I know I have talents, but one can't get on without money. If I had a hundred pounds or so to set myself up like a gentleman, with new clothes and a decent house, I could deliver lectures against Popery,—that's the best speculation now; and, Frederic, I have learned the worth of true religion; but my father, that's old Rollinson—I don't care if you know it—won't listen to me, nor let me stay in Manchester; all he gives me is a beggarly five pounds or the like, but I'll expose him if he does not set me up, and let the world see what sort of an old sinner he is for all the high head he holds in the chapel."

During the early part of this extemporary lecture—a specimen, doubtless, of the eloquence to be displayed with the new clothes and the decent house—I stood fairly bewildered; but, as it proceeded, I found time to collect my thoughts, and see what was expedient. "My long-lost cousin Dick" had not improved on his travels. Though still looking wonderfully like what the boy had promised—for such faces never change far—he had grown a large, lazy, worthless-looking man, with every indication of low life and lower habits. His revelation regarding Mr. Rollinson was not new to me; I had guessed something of the kind ever since I grew old enough to know how the world went, and had a shrewd

suspicion that the lady of "the genteel boarding house" was Dick's mamma; but he had come to get money, or make a manifestation, and it was clearly my duty to keep him out of the house if possible. Accordingly, I assumed an easy air, and asked him if he had been in Leopold Street.

"No," said Dick, "where's the use of going to her? she never has sixpence in her pocket a week after quarter-day, and she's always in the flings: the last time I asked her for something, she threatened to make an example of me. But, cousin Frederic, ain't it onhuman to think of a man living in them splendours," he pointed to the large dreary house, "and his own son going about like a wandering Jew, without money or clothes, or standing in society."

"We must all work for these things, cousin Dick," said I; "I have to do it, and I am younger than you. Mr. Rollinson is very ill to-night, and can see nobody; but here's half-a-sovereign, if it be of any use to you. I'll tell him to-morrow that you have been here, and doubtless he will make some arrangement."

"Could you lend me two or three more, Frederic?" said Dick, clutching the coin before it was well out of my purse; "I'll pay you faithfully when the old fellow comes to."

I solemnly assured him I had not another, and after a ravenous look at the park and mansion, my creditable cousin went off, desiring me to let

his father know that he was to be heard of at the "No-Popery" public-house, lately opened in Shettle Street; "but it was no matter, for he would call to-morrow forenoon."

How to communicate this intelligence I could not think, but as I neared the house the lights seemed moving at an unusual rate within,—there were sounds of hurrying feet and high-pitched voices, and at the door I met Davy Lawson runing in breathless haste for the doctor, because Mr. Rollinson had another fit. A return of his paralytic stroke had come upon the old gentleman while attempting to read to his son in my absence. He had been put to bed, but was still speechless and insensible; and now that its routine was overset, the disorder that reigned in that serious house could not be surpassed by the most irregular home in Britain. Master Richard Mackenzie sat at one side of his father's bed, telling himself the story of St. Lawrence's martyrdom in an uncommonly high key; Mrs. McCracken stood groaning at the other,—the three young ladies, just come from their school, were ringing bells, and wondering what would become of them, in different apartments,—while Mrs. Rollinson, profiting by the general confusion and open doors, made the mansion ring with her shouts of "Down with the Pope." In a short time Davy Lawson returned, bringing with him Dr. Phillips, a silent slow-going physician of the old school, who attended the family, and was believed to understand its

constitution. He examined the patient, and wrote a prescription, on which the young ladies somehow settled down; Mrs. McCall resumed the reins of her government in the back rooms upstairs; I withdrew my pupil to his own study, and when he was laid by for the night, came to sit up with my poor master,—while Davy Lawson and Mrs. McCracken watched also at the dressing-room fire, and told each other tales of witchcraft and possession which had come off in Scotland.

Towards morning the good housekeeper fell fast asleep in her chair, weary with groaning, I suppose, for she had done double duty that day, and I seized the occasion to give Davy an account of my evening interview. He said it was an awkward thing, but no doubt Providence had a hand in it; and when "my long-lost cousin," punctual to his own appointment, arrived, the confidential steward was ready to take him in hand. Dick had come determined to get up a scene, and some of the servants must have heard him insisting on a sight of "his dear dying father;" but after a quarter of an hour's discourse in the back-parlour, Davy escorted him safely to Leopold Street, where, it appeared, he induced his gentle mother to postpone the making of the intended example, for Dick henceforth abode in the "genteel boarding-house." Davy Lawson merited the confidence his master reposed in him: he lived to reward his own virtue in a singular fashion; but, while the

monarchy lasted, the Scotchman did his duty. In the meantime, he organized a provisional government, consisting of himself and me, whom he admitted to council as a relation of the family. For their united capacity Davy had a standing contempt, which was one of the things understood, but not expressed; and, certainly, a more useless household never encumbered a man's life; but Davy put everything in train, looked after everybody, from the farm labourers to Mrs. McCracken, and paid frequent but circumspect visits to Leopold Street, as I imagined, to keep Dick quiet. The great house settled into wonted sobriety round its master's sickness. The young ladies went forth to class and school, while a hired nurse officiated in their father's room. Mrs. Rollinson forgot the Pope, and came down with her basket to the back drawing-room. Master Richard and I went on with his favourite authors—the young gentleman lamenting that his father could not read to him now, and finding several new arguments against the Arminians.

The Rev. Riddle came with prayers and exhortations, by which we were all supposed to profit. I know they were published afterwards in a tract called "The Wheat Gathered In;" and the entire chapel came or sent to inquire for Mr. Rollinson. His second stroke was heavier than the first had been. I knew by Dr. Phillips' look it was a doubtful case—the man was on the verge of seventy-five, and for the last year or two his

strength had been breaking down. For some days he neither moved nor spoke, then a certain degree of animation returned; but his speech was thick and broken, and his mind strangely hazy. He knew all his family, but did not care to see them. He recognized the doctor and the clergyman, and seemed to have preserved his religious impressions; but he always called Davy Lawson second mate, and the nurse—a hard-faced woman, as much given to strong waters and snoring as most of those gentle dames who minister in British sick rooms—he invariably styled boatswain, and used to inquire how she got off from the sharks in Honduras Bay. Me he called nothing but John, and I soon learned that the old man's recollections had gone back to my father. He had evidently forgotten his cause of wrath against him, for he talked to me much and familiarly about places and persons I had never seen; and, strange to say, of his sea life also, in which my father had no part. He seemed pleased to have me near him; and it was the only return I could make for much kindness, to come and sit with him when Master Richard and all the household were asleep, and let the nurse snore, as she would have done anyway, in her easy chair.

It was in these lonely sittings that I first remarked what many a subsequent scene of life has illustrated to me, how unreliable for strength and comfort in our real necessities are those domestic ties by which society sets such store. Here was a

man with wife and children, and all manner of relations, left to solitude and strangers in his age and sickness. Doubtless, he had not sown well, and could not expect to reap; but the case has not been rare with wiser and better men. I was thinking of this—as I could think at twenty—one still frosty night, about a fortnight after Mr. Rollinson's seizure. The time-piece had struck two, the nurse was playing her wonted music, and I sat opposite the bed, when, looking up from my reflections, I saw that the old man had slightly raised his head, and was looking me full in the face.

"John," said he, speaking clearer than I had heard him since his illness began, "when you go back to my brother Richard, advise him to repent and do something good with his money. John, it is no wonder that the love of money is called the root of evil, for it brought me to this business. Isn't it strange to see those three negroes swimming after the ship still, and they so long dead? But they'll sink, they'll sink some time." And he laid his head down with something like a moan.

Those were the last intelligible words that I or anybody else ever heard from Mr. Rollinson. His breathing soon after became hard and heavy, his face took an ashy paleness. At four o'clock we sent for the doctor. By his orders the family were woke up, the minister was sent for, and we all sat watching about his bed till the grey of the winter morning crept in at the windows. Then

the pulse gradually ceased to beat under the doctor's finger, and without a groan or struggle the old man of so many adventures and changes went his appointed way.

There was little real mourning over his departure. The grief of the young ladies was at first loud and violent, but under the admonitions of the Rev. Riddle, they subsided into resignation with great celerity. On Master Richard his father's death had not the slightest effect. My belief is that no occurrence on this earthly stage could have moved his mind from its remarkable studies; and though somewhat hardened in his service by this time, I will confess to something like terror at his private speculations on whether or not his deceased parent had been one of the elect. In all that house of mourning, nothing went to my heart so much as the childlike grief of Mrs. Rollinson. Nobody minded her, for she was quiet, and sat in a corner, covering her face with her hands and moaning to herself, "He was always kind to Richard and me." In the midst of so much talk about faith and piety, how had her moonstruck mind hit on the man's best elegy? Richard and she were the parties who most needed kindness, and it was well for the old man's sake that she could say it, now that he was gone where the chances tell neither for nor against us, and the balance is fairly struck between sin and temptation.

Death was in the great house, and his presence

is like none other that comes to the dwellings of men; but I had grown familiar with him ever since the winding-sheet covered my mother's face. There went forth a funeral which was considered a sight in Manchester. The young ladies gave up school and class for a time, and had their mourning made. All the servants were put in sables, I think to the great satisfaction of Mrs. McCracken. There was a funeral sermon preached on the following Sunday, which afterwards appeared, together with a biographical notice, in the "Faithful Witness." The most remarkable passage in either was, "that Mr. Rollinson had realized a large fortune by industry and enterprise in foreign climes;" and that hint assisted me in the Latin inscription I wrote for his tombstone. It was much admired by the family and friends, and may still be read by the curious in the churchyard of St. Mary Magdalene. In short, we went creditably through all the ceremonies, and then assembled in the back drawing-room to the reading of the will.

There was nobody present but the family, old Fenton, and my former master, the Rev. Riddle, and myself; for Mr. Dodds, the legal adviser, had thrown out hints that it had better be private. He was, I must say, an honest-looking little man for a lawyer, composed and methodical withal as his own desk.

Mr. Rollinson's will was read from beginning to end. I remember that it constituted "his dear son Richard Mackenzie" sole heir of all his real

estate, with large subtractions for Mrs. Rollinson's jointure; that his chattel property, including money in the Funds, was divided among his three daughters—I think they were to have ten thousand apiece. That there was a legacy of five hundred to his nephew, Harry Fenton, with the hope that he would make a good use of it; one of three hundred to me, "in consideration of my dutiful attention to his son;" a farm for Davy Lawson; a small annuity for Mrs. McCracken; and the executors were "Charles Rose, Esq., of Rosebank, Derbyshire, and the Hon. George Mackenzie, of Loch-Linn, county of Moray, in the kingdom of Scotland." When Mr. Dodds had finished the reading he folded up the will, wiped his spectacles, and produced from his pocket a letter which he had received that morning from Gilchrist and Co., solicitors, Chancery Lane, London, setting forth—

"That Janet Sutherland Rollinson and her sons Edward and Richard Rollinson, sometime called Favoursham, had served themselves heirs of the late Edward Rollinson, of Oak Park, in the county of Lancaster, as his lawful wife and children by a marriage contracted according to the law of Scotland in the year 1807."

I don't think anybody in the room fully comprehended the meaning of that missive except Harry Fenton, and he looked as if uncertain whether the floor or the ceiling would give way first.

"What is it about, Frederic?" said Master Richard, looking me wistfully in the face.

"What's the meaning of that, Mr. Dodds?" said poor Mrs. Rollinson, while old Fenton poked himself up in his chair, and the three young ladies sat staring in mute astonishment.

"My dear madam," said Mr. Dodds, "it means that a person named Janet Sutherland says she was married to the late Mr. Rollinson in the year 1807."

"Married to the late Mr. Rollinson in the year 1807!" responded the luckless widow, and the three young ladies had by this time found their tongues. However efficient they may have been in Bible-class or Sunday School, I must admit that their intelligence was neither shining nor serviceable in any emergency of a temporal kind. The substance of their united animadversions on the communication of Gilchrist and Co. was,

"That it must be a great story, for their papa had never talked of anything of the kind; that it was all made up by some wicked people in London"—they had strong convictions regarding the sinfulness of the British capital—"that it was just somebody who wanted to frighten them and get money;" and poor Mrs. Rollinson, now getting rapidly excited, suggested that they were Jesuits. At this point Mr. Dodds thought it better to break off the conference. He said the ladies should not disturb themselves; he would send for the executors, explain everything to them, and

consult what steps were proper to be taken; but, in taking leave, he whispered to me that, "as the nearest relatives of the family, he wished to see Mr. Harry Fenton and myself at his office that afternoon." I told the artist—he was staying at his father's then—and I found him in Mr. Dodds' office when I went. The lawyer told us it was a bad case. "Mr. Rollinson's marriage with Miss Christina Mackenzie had not taken place till 1812, five years after his alleged marriage with Janet Sutherland; and though that had not been a regular transaction, he feared, as it occurred in Scotland, it would stand good in law. The late Mr. Rollinson evidently did not apprehend this, or he would not have made such a will. Though executed with the best intentions, you perceive it is defective in the legal requisites of witnesses and some other formalities, which, under the circumstances, will render it null and void. But," added the judicious solicitor, "my esteemed client was much occupied with the education of his son, and in doing good, I may say, to all around him. However, I will send for the executors, and see what can be done."

When his first astonishment was over, Harry Fenton's mind seemed entirely at rest on the subject. He asked no questions, and made no remarks.

"What do you think of it, Mr. Fenton?" said I, as we left the office together.

"Think of it," said he, "she'll be mistress of

Oak Park, as sure as it stands yonder; that's what she must have meant by saying, as I heard her many a time, that her and her sons would be somebody when folk that carried high heads were smaw enough in Manchester. What on earth did she keep it so quiet for? I can't understand that, Freddy; but the Scotch have queer ways; they are as deep as draw-wells, man, woman, and child of them. She was too deep for old Rollinson. You see, a man may be married in Scotland without knowing it. If ever you cross the Tweed, Freddy, take care and don't get hooked." That particular form of being caught had been always a terror to Mr. Harry Fenton, though his personal freedom did not benefit him much. In the meantime, he did not get his legacy of five hundred; neither did anybody else, for the law was in the way. The executors were sent for, and Mr. Rose came, though it was heavy January weather. He brought me a long letter from Lucy, with some winter flowers in it, took up his abode at the "Bible and Crown," and wished "that poor Mr. Rollinson had pitched on some younger man." Well he might, for the Hon. George Mackenzie was travelling on the Continent, and nobody knew his whereabout; so Mr. Rose had to do duty for two in what Lancashire lawyers still call the great Rollinson case. With its details I will not trouble my readers, partly because law is a science whose technicalities I could never understand, and partly because the story can be told in fewer words.

Janet Sutherland succeeded in proving by written evidence as well as that of her cousins five times removed—Davy Lawson and Andrew Gilchrist—that she was the lawful wife of Edward Rollinson, by a marriage privately contracted in Edinburgh five years before that of Christina Mackenzie; that, consequently, her children were his lawful heirs, and the said Christina and her family nameless and illegitimate. Why the lady of the "genteel boarding-house" and the "narvous turns" should have consented to keep her claim in abeyance for so many years puzzled me as much as Mr. Fenton: he finally settled on the fact that the Scotch had queer ways; but Dodds' explanation was probably nearer the truth, namely, that Janet did not at first know her actual advantages; that she was aware there might have been opportunities found for dissolving the marriage in Scotland, when Mr. Rollinson determined on forming a better connexion; and that, being pretty well pensioned, she lived in expectation of the old man's departure. At all events Davy Lawson said "she was a varry respectable woman," and he resigned service in Oak Park immediately after the reading of the will, becoming, as I understood, a regular and punctually paying lodger with Mrs. Glass. From that dignified retirement he took occasional journeys to London and Edinburgh, as the progress of Mrs. Sutherland's suit demanded —for I have already said that Davy was discovered to be the lady's cousin five times removed, and be-

came one of the principal witnesses for her marriage with the late Mr. Rollinson, to whom he had been a confidential, and, I believe, a faithful steward. In the lull of legal business Davy went about at his leisure, cultivating his chapel acquaintances, and calling often and openly on his cousin. The sunshine of approaching fortune had visited that mansion: the title of "genteel boarding-house" was effaced from its door, Mrs. Sutherland said "she took in nobody now." Dick lounged about it as respectable-looking as new clothes could make him, and never smoked anything but a cigar. Ned broke up his camp in Liverpool, resigning at the same time his pretensions to the hand of Miss Wiggins—I never knew how he got out of that business—and took the chief conduct of his mamma's affairs, carefully impressing on all her law agents that he was the eldest son. The lady herself wore a clean silk gown permanently, and never went to the house at the corner in person. Mary Ann kept her post, and if she continued her eatings they were not so much heard of. Moreover, the whole family—it was thought by Davy's advice—took sittings in the Rev. Riddle's chapel.

The law's delay, which Hamlet justly reckons "among the quips and scorns of time," was tolerably exemplified in the great Rollinson case. It is probable that Mr. Dodds and his coadjutors knew from the beginning they could only protract the defence; and never had limbs—I mean gentle-

men—of the law more unavailable clients. Poor Mrs. Rollinson, owing either to the shock of late occurrences, or some turn peculiar to her malady, had sunk into a state of quiet but changeless imbecility, and remained in the back rooms upstairs. Master Richard was not conversable except on his favourite subjects; and the three young ladies were a terror to their legal advisers. The Hon. George Mackenzie could not be heard of. Wearied out with law forms and consultations, attacked by rheumatism, and able to do nothing, Mr. Rose went home; and Manchester people began to say that Oak Park would shortly change hands.

CHAPTER XIV.

Thou settest store by human love and reverence:
Be fortunate, and they will track thy steps
Through all the mires of sin and fogs of folly.
Thou need'st no worth of heart, no wealth of mind,
But only this—that the stars favor thee:
For thereon rest man's friendship, woman's love,
The world's acclaim—yea, and the home affections.
Therefore I say to thee, be fortunate.
—*The Hermit of the Woods.*

DEPOSED monarchs and displaced ministers, faded beauties, actors gone out of fashion, and all sorts of eclipsed people, you know something of the aspect which society began to present to the family of my deceased patron, when the conclusion quoted in the former chapter became general. The eyes of the chapel no longer turned to the Rollinson pew, except with a wondering look that they were there yet. There was no such press of anxious enquirers after the health and happiness of the entire household when sermon was over. The children of even their own mills set their school at nought, and the dealers in hard peas and cherry ripe became absolutely ungovernable. I don't think the Rev. Riddle found them half so efficient in the "work," for there was a great slackness of the cards and catechising. The ladies

of the Dorcas Society could sew without them now, and the missionary from Caffreland had no time for coming to tea. The Fentons had an early perception of the probabilities, and now became jealous of my reputation.

"My dear Frederic," said Mr. Harry, as we met in King Street one day, "you really must take another situation. A marriage called in question, you know, does not make the house quite respectable for a young man of your family. Dr. Dilworth is advertising for an assistant. I am sure he would prefer you, knowing your friends, and, I may say, your talents. Could not you just mention—not to hurt their feelings, you understand—that the state of your health required a change."

No doubt Mr. Harry's advice was prudent, but the old man in St. Mary Magdalene had been kind to me. Poor Richard, dreadful as he was, had nobody else to help him through Calvin and the martyrs. I had been proud of the family patronage in the days of their greatness, and I would not leave them now in the time of tribulation; for which Mrs. Fenton said, "Frederic was a headstrong boy;" her lord and master hoped I had saved something; and George remarked there was no use in advising me. Mr. Rose, however, wrote that "I was a noble fellow for holding by the family in their distress, and Providence would reward me;" and Lucy sent me a letter, which I valued then above all the respectability of Man-

chester. Those were the days of my juvenile indiscretion, when that unlucky leaning to the losing side prevailed. Losing the Rollinsons were—Mr. Dodds made no secret of that. Honest man, he did his best for the defence, carrying it from one court to another, through the tedious labyrinth constructed by the wisdom of British legislators, and had at length got as far as the House of Lords; but I'll never forget the rueful countenance with which he pointed to a pile of papers, half his own height, in a corner of the office, and inquired, "Mr. Favoursham, where will all these law costs come from?" Once dispossessed of Oak Park and its dependencies, it appeared the Rollinsons would be poor. Like many good families in Scotland, the maternal house had been richer in blood than in funds; and the small fortune settled on their mother at her marriage was the only provision remaining for her four children. To use the solicitor's phrase, it was a bad case; but none of the poor souls concerned seemed to comprehend it. I don't think any of the three sisters knew exactly how the suit was going, though they took every opportunity to cast disdain on Mrs. Sutherland and her sons.

In the turns and changes I have related more than a twelvemonth wore away. Lucy did not come up—her grandfather was so scandalized at the revelation of his deceased brother-in-law's doings. The Fentons had once more abandoned me to my fate. Robert Rose held on to the Latin

Grammar, and visited me with greater friendship than ever—frequently assuring me that I was right in staying with the Rollinsons, and all the good blood of the family was on my side. I did not go down to Rosebank for the same reasons that kept me in the service. I could not be well spared, and the point of honor stood high and fine with me in those days. Neither did I go to Leopold Street, though Dick, in our accidental meetings, occasionally invited me, and said he would never despise his blood relations. So time passed, and I came to my majority, quietly as people do who have no estates to inherit or spend. The event had no emancipation to bring—I had been left to my own guardianship ever since my mother's death; but at this period I received a letter from my aunt Grizzle, whose respectability was also disturbed by my residence in the house with a disputed marriage, indicating that she and my uncle Gurney were ready to welcome me back to Old Bridge Street if I had saved any money to put into the shop. Saving was never one of my accomplishments, and for the last year I had got no salary, for money was scarce about Oak Park. The tenants kept the rents, and the mill-managers their cash, till they were made sure of their superior. All things were going at sixes and sevens in the absence of Davy Lawson: one serious servant after another deserted the mansion, though I must do Mrs. McCracken the justice to say that she maintained the integrity of its ancient cere-

monial with all her might, and groaned rather more than formerly.

The three young ladies were growing fretful and quarrelsome for want of work and attention. The queerly twisted mind of my pupil seemed to be following his mother's track—he began to forget the martyrs now, grew hazy at times on predestination, used to wonder why his father did not come and read to him, and advise me not to run away to sea.

I had gone out for a walk while he slept one clear cold evening in the snowdrop time. The robin was singing on the trees above; and I was thinking of Lucy, when the sound of a horse's hoofs coming up the avenue startled me, and I saw a handsome military looking man, well-dressed and well-mounted, who made me a slight salute, and said,

"Would you be good enough to tell me if this is Oak Park?"

I assured him of the locality; and to his inquiry, if he had the pleasure of addressing one of the family, responded that I was only a relation of the late Mr. Rollinson, and had for some time acted as tutor to his son."

"Oh, Mr. Frederic Favoursham," said he, presenting his hand; "I have heard of your kindness to my sister's family. My name is Mackenzie: tell me how they are situated, for I reached the port of London only yesterday morning."

I told him as plainly and as pleasantly as the

case would admit of; and we entered the house together, very good, and, I think, very sincere friends.

He was a man about fifty, but he wore his years well, notwithstanding military service and extensive travelling. A Scotch gentleman of the old school—high born and high bred, proud as a Highland chieftain, and accustomed never to forget his rank, but equally mindful of the claims of others, whatever might be their station; high in honor and somewhat formal in courtesy. There was a melancholy, and, at times, a softened expression in his fine manly countenance, as if he had suffered much and silently; nor was it without cause: out of seven brothers and sisters the Honorable George Mackenzie was the only individual who did not live under some government similar to that of Mrs. McCall. That fatal heritage had clung to the Mackenzies, while feudal rights and fair domains passed from them. They had enlarged its borders among the families of Britain—as mankind always spread and perpetuate their own miseries; but the Hon. George, though heir and chief representative of his family, had, either from prudence, grace, or because it suited him best, remained a single and solitary man. Loch-Linn, the property of which he was, in Scottish parlance, laird, was a small land-loch bay of the Moray Frith, with some fishermen's huts and shepherds' sheelings scattered on the moorlands round it, and a grey square tower

perched on the rocks above, and known, since the beginning of the fourteenth century, as Mackenzie's hold. The family had a town house too, in Bucklue Place, Edinburgh, where Mr. Rollinson had made the acquaintance of Miss Christina, when assemblies were still held in the Canongate, and some remnants of Scotch aristocracy lingered in the old town. Sons and daughters had married off, the town house was left to the guardianship of one trusty cousin, the moorland tower to the custody of another; the Hon. George had served in a Highland regiment almost throughout the late war, and was sometimes called Major yet, though he sold his commission at the peace, and spent his time in travelling—they said in pilgrim fashion—through the by-ways and unfrequented corners of Europe. Such were the particulars of the Hon. George's history, as I gathered them from Davy Lawson, who always remained a steadfast friend of mine, and, notwithstanding his adherence to his cousin's cause, invariably spoke of the Mackenzies as an ancient and honorable house.

What a blow to its solitary chief, with all his family pride and old-world honor, the result of that lawsuit must have been,—to find his sister's marriage made null and void, with all the social consequences to her children! A blot cast on the escutcheon without a possibility of redress; and the old man who had done all this gone beyond the reach of law or retaliation. Mr. Mackenzie

had great self-command, and, like most Scotchmen, a rather frozen exterior; but, within, fire burned. I never saw him speaking on the subject without a sort of convulsive quiver passing over his features; and I know he did not like to name Mr. Rollinson. It is probable that the Hon. George was the only one of his family fully sensible of the misfortune; but he evidently understood their capacity, and managed matters like a man of business. He greeted his nieces with great politeness—like so many young ladies accidentally met with—but never spoke to them on family affairs, and they seemed to stand in some dread of their uncle. He visited his sister in her rooms; and the event must have excited the poor lady, for I heard her shouting that he had married the black-eyed woman. He also paid Master Richard a visit in his study, and I never saw that young gentleman overawed before. After dinner he sent for Mr. Dodds, and they remained closeted together till far in the night. Next morning he requested a few moments' conversation with me in the library, and when we were fairly shut in, he said,

"Mr. Favoursham, the position in which my sister and her family have been placed by the late decision of the Judges, renders their removal from this house advisable. They are going to reside sometime on my property in the north of Scotland. I do not expect—indeed, I do not wish—that you should accompany them to the wilds of Moray.

No tutor, I fear, can do much for my nephew. I know you have spared no pains to instruct him, and have done more than a relation's duty to the whole family, for which I sincerely thank you; but it would be injurious to your interest, and could not serve theirs, to lose the best years of your youth in a wild and backward corner of Scotland."

People are rarely pleased to find themselves not wanted. Perhaps the Scotchman thought me an unnecessary expense; perhaps he did not wish me to see the nakedness of the Mackenzie land; at all events, it was clear my presence could be dispensed with, and I felt resigned to the prospect of leaving with honor. I, therefore, thanked Mr. Mackenzie "for his flattering estimate of my humble services," assuring him I had only done my duty; hinted my unwillingness to go so far north, and attempted a small eulogium on Master Richard, to which his uncle listened with most exemplary patience. When it was finished, he discharged my claims in full; I felt ashamed to take the money, but had not the grace to refuse it, being still poorer than the Mackenzies, and the Honourable George would scarcely have countenanced that proceeding: however, he told me that the family should leave on Monday next, but I might remain at Oak Park as long as it suited me, or at least till its legal possession was decided; and he would exert himself to find me another situation.

Mrs. McCracken had a heavy concern of pack-

ing for some days, and early on Monday morning, while the wintry stars were still in the sky, two post-chaises drove up quietly to the door, and the entire household set out in charge of Mrs. McCall and Fraser, the coachman, who, being both natives of Loch-Linn, could be depended on. The young ladies cried a great deal at leaving Oak Park, which seemed the only matter that distressed them; Master Richard was put into the chaise, half asleep, by his trusty Sally; two trunks full of his books went with him, and I don't know what had been told him, but he bid me good-bye cheerfully, and said, "Papa would read to him till I came." His poor mother took a long look, first at the house, then up into the grey sky, and said, "Yes, yes, we are going early for fear of the Jesuits."

So the Oak Park family, who had been in such power and glory when I first came to Manchester with Harry Fenton, set out as quietly as they could that winter morning for an old solitary tower beside the Moray Frith, and left me standing on the steps of the great house, which was even then passing into the hands of the two boys on whom old Rollinson had made those fortnightly visitations and the lady of the "narvous turns."

It is curious what curves the Tower of Siloam sometimes takes in falling. That old man, in the midst of his long penance and ill-gathered wealth, had never thought it necessary to make a provision for Janet Sutherland, and her children, beyond

the paltry pittance with which he paid for secrecy during his life; and, behold, when his will was made, and his heirs appointed, those concealed creatures stepped into possession of house and lands, factories and funded thousands, casting out his well-connected family to ruin and disgrace. The wrong had not come down on the doer, yet I have some veneration for that silently working and many-loopholed law of Scotland. There is a leaven of conscientiousness in it, as there is in the national character, underlying all its cunning and care of the main-chance; and the matrimony department, against which I was so emphatically warned by Harry Fenton, seems to contain more crevices for social justice than any Christian code with which I am acquainted.

Well, the Rollinsons went from Oak Park, and my path has never crossed theirs since; but I know their subsequent history. When all was over, and the House of Lords had decided against them, they took the name of Mackenzie, and lived on in the old tower of Loch-Linn, where the young ladies did their wonted catechising among the shepherds and fishermen; and Mary, the middle sister, whom I always thought the plainest, got married to a neighbouring laird. I am not aware that the essay on the "Fall of Man" was ever published, but about two years after their settlement in the north, there appeared in the *Christian Casket*,—a publication which I believe still circulates in Edinburgh—"Some Account

of the Life and Death of that Pious and Gifted Child, Master Richard Mackenzie, Nephew of the Honorable George Mackenzie, of Loch-Linn." His poor mother did not long survive him; but first the eldest, and then the youngest, daughter's mind went exactly as hers had gone, so that Mrs. McCall continued in office till obliged to retire through the increase of years, and I understand she was duly succeeded by her daughter. The Hon. George made a point of visiting the Tower once every winter while he lived; but I will have occasion to tell his after-story.

In the meantime, I left him at Oak Park, deep in law papers; it was beneath me to remain there when my pupil was gone, and I had been paid off. Davy Lawson occupied my ancient quarters with Mrs. Glass, which were, moreover, below my present fortunes. None of my relations should have it to say that I came to them for shelter, though Dick, who happened to meet me in the street the same day, said "that I would be in want of a place now, since those Mackenzie people were off, and he didn't care if I came over to Leopold Street to give him finishing lessons, for old Manson in Liverpool had not done him justice." Probably none of my cousin's early teachers had acquitted themselves to his liking; but I declined the finishing of his education with great dignity, and retired to the Bible and Crown to meditate on an ancient design I had of going to London. What I was to do there was not

very clear to my own mind, but the metropolis has a magnetic attraction for all the hopeful and unsettled. I would go first to see Rosebank, however: they had not invited me for some time, but I would just take a look at the place, and, perhaps, see Lucy over the hedge, as Lavance used to do.

I was musing on those matters in the identical blue parlour where Harry Fenton had arrived from London some five years before, when the painter himself walked in with a reconciled countenance, which was something new, for he had looked reprovingly at me ever since I refused to leave the Rollinsons.

"My dear Freddy," said he, "I have been looking for you everywhere,—it is the luckiest thing in the world: Doctor Dilworth is out of an assistant again, just as you are out of a situation, and has written to give you the offer. He is Mrs. William's brother-in-law, you know; and the truth is, we wrote to him about you when he first advertised, and things were going wrong at Oak Park. Here is his letter."

The epistle which Mr. Fenton put into my hand was addressed to Mrs. William. Its writer enquired—"If Mr. Favoursham, the young man in whom her relations were interested, was now disengaged, as his assistant had unfortunately fallen sick, and he required a person to fill his place immediately, because the examination was approaching. If Mr. Favoursham could come on

or before the 10th current, he would be happy to receive him at the salary formerly stated,—forty pounds a-year, with board. He hoped she and her family were well; and he remained, hers sincerely, JOHN DILWORTH."

"You see," said Mr. Fenton, when I had read it, "the salary is small; but Doctor Dilworth is a wonderfully clever man, and his Institution stands high. To have been an assistant there would be a recommendation to you over all England; so I advise you not to lose the chance."

I have always remarked that nothing shows so much of a man as his letters. Doctor Dilworth's characters were stiff, and his style hard and cold; but I had heard the fame of his Institution: it was something more certain than going to London, which could be done any time. I therefore decided to give the Doctor a trial, and wrote "that I should have the pleasure of waiting upon him on, or, if possible, before the 10th current."

The entire Fenton family concluded a treaty with me as soon as that determination was made known. Mrs. William was particularly gracious; and, considering herself one of the high contracting powers, she thought it necessary to give me some intimation of the perils I was to encounter.

"My dear boy," said she, "you will find the Dilworth Institution a wonderful seminary, and some things will seem very strange to you, coming out of such a serious family. The Doctor has

notions of his own, as learned men will have: I can't say they are all right—such things are beyond me; but every place has its ways, and I know you have good principles."

All my kindred gave me similar warnings against the Doctor's notions; but every one approved of my going, for the Dilworth Institution was a prosperous concern. Old Fenton said "he was an infidel, but he had made money and Freddy should take pattern by that." Mr. Harry gave me a long lecture on the sound principles in which I had been trained up. George had the good sense to say nothing at all; but Mrs. Fenton and her daughters packed up the "Young Man's Guide" together with sundry tracts, as munitions of war for my spiritual defence. Robert Rose "did not like the idea of me going among free-thinkers and maybe Radicals; but he understood the Dilworth Institution brought people forward, and no doubt it was the doing of Providence for my good behaviour to those poor Rollinsons. Would not Lucy be glad when she heard it? But Mr. Rose had taken her to see his half-sister in the High Peak, whom he never cared for, because she had married twice, and was always grumbling." That news prevented my run to Rosebank. Indeed, time would scarcely have permitted it; but I wrote Lucy a great letter, and Mr. Rose a little one, packed up my goods and chattels, took leave of all my friends, including Davy Lawson and the Hon. George, and set forth for the chief

town of Berkshire, partly posting and partly stage-coaching it, for, as yet, the iron roads had not seamed the land, though Stephenson's surveyors were even then taking levels by night, and hiding in ditches by day, from the wrath of the gentlemen-farmers through whose territory was to run the first railway between Manchester and Liverpool.

CHAPTER XV.

Nature had formed that soul by rule and square—
There was no gap to fill, no nook to spare—
Complete in native narrowness it stood,
And in creation's mighty mirror viewed
But its own image; well content, therefore,
To think that heaven or earth contained no more.
—*Sir Jasper's Rhymes.*

PHRENOLOGY had been preached in Britain soon after the peace—by-the-bye, there was a great deal of preaching then; the nations got time to listen, for the cannon had ceased. It must have been fitted for the people and the times, seeing that it flourished and obtained dominion in spite of the *Edinburgh Review*, the Medical Colleges, and a host of adversaries too numerous to mention. At the time of my story, its reign was triumphant, if not glorious. It had its magazines and its newspapers, its societies and lecture-rooms, its professors of all grades, with dues to match, for everybody wanted their own and their friends' heads examined. In short, it held public meetings, it moved resolutions, it took up subscriptions, and, no doubt, it gave dinners, like everything else that comes and goes in England.

It is curious that the fervour concerning that

German method of accounting for all things in the human cranium, did not, as usual, descend on the lower levels of society from the drawing-rooms of St. James' and Belgravia. On the contrary, it never appeared in any force on those heights of fashion, being, perhaps, too precise and practical for the *beau monde* to ferment about; but, to the classes used to work and reckon, the mercantile and manufacturing interest in all its varieties of merchant, clerk, and artisan, phrenology came like a temporary revelation. The ladies studied it extensively—the bumps and organs almost superseded scandal at small tea-parties. Doctors, who knew their own interests, took service under it. All the philanthropists dabbled in it, and every young man who intended to be sensible, provided himself with a cast and skull. In the manufacturing towns its welcome was warmest—Manchester came out strong on the occasion; but my youth was situated between the two sections of its inhabitants, with whom phrenology had a bad reputation—the high Tories, who knew it had shaken hands with Radicalism; and the strictly Evangelical, who had found out its infidel tendency. On that account, probably, I never became an ardent convert; and, notwithstanding the opportunities and experience to be hereafter related, I have no verdict to record on the subject but that convenient one for the puzzled jurors of Scotland —not proven; and hold it one of the thousand echoes which time has given back to the many's

still unanswered question—Who shall show us any good?

Doctor Dilworth had been raised, as the Americans say, in Manchester. The only son of an Independent minister, one of the Rev. Riddle's predecessors, who had hoped to see him shine in the same pulpit; but the young man, either from distaste or scruples of conscience, disappointed his fond expectations, and turned aside to the medical profession, which he attained, it was said, with difficulty, owing to straitened means. Tradition also asserted that there was not a town from Canterbury to Carlisle in which he had not angled in vain for practice; and at length, venturing northward, cast his net, with as little chance of success, in Edinburgh, when Gall began his lectures in that city. If not his first convert, the Doctor was a zealous one: he championed the cause in its early struggles against the mighty men of the *Review* and the University; and having little else to do with his time, wrote a pamphlet, called "The Human System," which was believed to have silenced many gainsayers, and brought him into notice, particularly with a rich relation settled in Reading.

This gentleman had made his fortune by a biscuit factory, and proved rather unlucky in the matrimonial lottery, for his spouse deserted her colours, having awoke somewhat late to the fact that there were thirty years between their ages. It is worthy of note that every new scheme of faith

and practice finds its readiest receivers among those with whom some part of life's machinery has gone wrong. Doctor Dilworth's pamphlet converted his rich relation to phrenology, and Doctor Dilworth was ultimately invited to try his fortune in the county of Berks. They say it was the only part of England he had not tried, and there he went, but not in search of practice. His rich relation received him with all the honors, and at length lent him money to open a school for the development and application of the new doctrine, which in process of time became the Dilworth Institution. It had increased in profits and popularity with the cause on which it was founded. There was no newspaper that did not rejoice in its advertisements, no town or village where its fame was not heard. Unmanageable boys were sent there from every quarter, and girls too, for the Doctor had married Mrs. William's eldest sister, on phrenological principles, to take charge of the female department; and his many addresses to the public set forth that every peculiarity of physical or mental constitution would receive that attention and assistance which the new science alone enabled its professors to bestow. The strong believers had marvellous tales of the benefits conferred on mankind by the Doctor and his Institution. Boys given up in despair by tutors and schoolmasters as something worse than stupid, had been sent home shining characters at the second Christmas. Young ladies on the point

of being sent to Bedlam, had been restored to their families after eighteen months' tuition, with the full complement of common sense and an extra supply of gifts and graces. The good advice bestowed on parents and guardians in the Doctor's half-yearly circulars, had retrieved the peace and brightened the prospects of many families: his counsels more privately communicated had enabled numbers of people to make advantageous settlements in life and in business; while the good done to the poor in his neighbourhood was all but incredible.

I have observed the doing of good to be somehow associated with every paying business; but I left myself on my way to Doctor Dilworth. Of that journey I remember nothing but that it was very wet and very dirty; that I found the roads longer and deeper than had been taken into my calculation; that I scolded a waiter and bribed a postillion for the first time in my life; and arrived with a muddy coach full of farmers at the Bedford Arms, in Russell Street, Reading, just in time to hear the news of the Battle of Navarino, which the morning mail had brought from London. Russia was our ally then, the Turks were our abomination, Greece was the country to be done for, and Codrington the man to be talked of; but home interests occupied me, and when I was made presentable and the clock had struck nine—for a man of the Doctor's eminence was not to be intruded on too early,—I enquired, with some pomp,

for the Dilworth Institution, and was assured that if I went straight up I would see it on my right, for it was the last house in London Street.

Reader, has no chance of business or pleasure ever brought you to the pleasant country town of Reading? If so, consult the *Parliamentary Gazetteer*, and it will tell you that it was a place of importance in the Saxon times, but now contains few vestiges of antiquity, except the Church of St. Mary Butts; that it was the depôt of French prisoners during the late war, and is at present celebrated for its manufactures of biscuits and sauce. To this historical information I can add that you will find it neat, but scattered over a gently rising ground, skirted by villas and girdled by parks and mansions, for Cheapside men have come and built there: that it is surrounded by a rich farming district glorious to behold in the harvest time, and stands where Berkshire meets the learned County of Oxford, and the Thames between them runs clear and narrow, with no breadth of Bermondsey or the Docks about it. I might also enlarge on the increase of the town, with suitable extracts from everybody's returns, but I will only say that, when I saw the Dilworth Institution, it was the last building in London Street, though there are many beyond it now; an ordinary brick house, something larger than the rest of the row, with more ground in the rear, and a door-plate above the common size declaring its name. A staring servant-maid took in my

card, and informed me that the Doctor's receiving hour was passed, but that he would see me, and I was ushered into a square well-lighted room set round with glass cases, containing casts and models of heads to an amount I had never dreamed of, with a sprinkling of books among them, and at a writing-desk in the centre there sat a thin wiry man, getting rather bald, and his face would have been placid and pleasing but for a wooden expression it had, and a look of cold sharpness in the deep-set eyes. He gave me a slight nod, and said,

"Mr. Favoursham, I will talk with you by-and-bye, but this is my letter-writing hour; you may take a book, or amuse yourself with looking at the casts there."

Of course, I turned to the casts immediately,—it was proper to be interested in the chief concern of the house; and they were a wondrous gathering. All the notables of ancient and modern times who had been crowned or hanged,—who had coined or conquered, written books, or committed forgery,—were there, duly labelled for instruction and confirmation in the Doctor's science. When he had folded, sealed, and directed five letters, he looked at the clock which stood opposite, and said—

"Now, Mr. Favoursham, we will talk. You are aware that the Institution is conducted on phrenological principles; do you understand phrenology?"

I had bought two numbers of the *Edinburgh Phrenological Journal*, and read them in the stage coach to very little purpose; moreover, the Doctor was taking a calm survey of my cranium, and I answered, with some hesitation, that "I was afraid not perfectly, but I hoped to learn."

"Very good," said the Doctor, apparently satisfied with my bumps, and speaking in the low dry tone which I found was habitual to him, "I will take you six months for trial and teaching; of course, you can expect no salary, but you may board in the house. My son, Arkwright, who acts as first usher, will instruct you; and if you are competent at the end of the six months, I will receive you as my assistant, on the usual terms."

My mind had not been prepared for this view of the subject, but being committed to the Institution, I acquiesced with the best grace possible, and accompanied the Doctor to the school-room, where my probation began.

Doctor Dilworth deserved his celebrity, as most men do who attain the like; he was a man of singular sagacity, energy, and perseverance; he had some benevolence, too, and had all mankind been formed on the same model, which Heaven forbid, his system would have been the very thing for setting the world to rights. But in forming the Doctor's mind, Nature had employed only her mechanical resources; she had given

him the powers of reckoning and perception in no ordinary degree—he could undertand and estimate the material and the tangible: within that limit his conclusions were sound and his success certain; but beyond it the Doctor had neither scope nor view. All that belongs to the realm of fire and fancy—those subtile elements which cannot be weighed or measured, yet make the light of this life, and keep among us the prophecy of another—they had been left out of his composition: he lived by his watch, he moved by his table-book, and he believed in training. The system that mapped out thought and feeling according to form and size, and showed their landmarks on the visible skull, was the natural theology of such a character. It had come in time for the Doctor—hence his zeal for its advancement and his success in its application; for he was successful, not alone in obtaining praise and profit, but in drilling up or down, to a certain level of routine sense, the odd and otherwise unmanageable specimens of human confusion that were sent to his school. Education was his rampart against all future ills—his panacea for all existing grievances. He had an honest conviction that saints, sages, and poets could be grown like turnips with the help of phrenology; and I have heard him seriously talking to half-witted boys about assimilating their heads to those of Milton and Shakspeare. Next to education, the Doctor worshipped punctuality: it was with him the essence of all the cardinal

virtues, and in this his practice equalled his faith, for I don't think he would have allowed the restoration of all things to have gone on if it happened to interfere with the hour for breakfast; and I am sure that being at the gate as the appointed hour struck, would have been in his eyes a sufficient title to the "kingdom come." I am forgetting, however, that the "kingdom come" was an Institution which Doctor Dilworth did not recognize. He pooh-poohed religion in general, particularly Church-going, and all Sunday observances; discouraged allusions of any kind to the other world, and discoursed only of the duties people owed to themselves and society. At the time of my story freethinking had not gone quite so far out of fashion as at present. The first visit of the cholera struck a mighty blow on its bulwarks; but then they stood high and strong, particularly among the talking democracy, where the new science flourished and the Doctor had his fame. My respected principal was, therefore, somewhat proud of being called an Infidel, and lost no opportunity of displaying his banner, to the great scandal of the clergy and the pious inhabitants of the town, with whom he lived in a sort of drawn battle.

To those who had the happiness of knowing her easy sister—the spouse of "the drudge"—Mrs. Dilworth must have presented a striking illustration of the unlikeness occasionally found in near relations. She was a little woman, of a stamp

common in England, but I hope nowhere else: bone and muscle appeared to be the entire components of her person and character; there was nothing soft, nothing easy about her. She had a small flinty face, which rarely changed either colour or expression, and a sharp treble voice, which always sounded as if she was ordering somebody. I don't believe any tradesman could have overcharged her a farthing; I am sure no cap or bonnet in the neighbourhood ever escaped her eye. She talked in the matter-of-fact style; she dressed strictly in the fashion, and went through the world hard and tight, determined to get her room, her sight, and her dinner,—for under these three heads were comprehended all the requirements of Mrs. Dilworth's life. The Doctor had married her young, I suppose for the better opportunity of training, and the lady seemed to have fulfilled his fondest expectations: her faith in the science, and in the Institution, was without limit. She sewed ostentatiously at the window on Sundays, wondering people could lose time going to those churches; and had Thuggee by any chance become the doctrine of the Dilworth dynasty, she would have wondered that everybody did not make nooses and learn to throw them—not from conviction or even attachment, but from pure incapability of thinking or being anything but what she was taught. Nevertheless, Mrs. Dilworth was a useful helpmate; perhaps it is of such materials that useful help-

mates are made. She kept the accounts, she saw that nothing went to waste, she conducted the female part of the Institution, and did most of the scolding on the premises.

The only son and heir of the Dilworth establishment was the Master Arkwright into whose hands I was delivered. Arkwright Spurzheim was his name in full; but like the Emperor of China's patronymic, it was used only on solemn occasions. The Doctor had named his eldest son in honor of the two men he considered the greatest benefactors to their species; and there had been a younger brother, John Gall, but death had summoned him from class and teacher while he was yet in training to be second usher, which untoward event obliged the Doctor to employ an assistant. My preceptor was about my own age, a tall thin young man—there was nobody in that house fat; perhaps it would not have been according to phrenology. His head was very small; I don't know what the science said of it, but his face always reminded me of an empty skull, it was so gaunt and vacant, except when he was cross—no rare occurrence with Master Arkwright. He was termed first usher, and intended to succeed his father, but the business of the young gentleman's life was taking care of his health, in order to avoid the fate of John Gall; for I believe he regarded going to the house appointed for all living as a species of accident which might be prevented by keeping

judiciously out of draughts, and looking well after the east wind.

I was to be under his command, even if found competent, at the end of the six months; but there was an inferior for me also in the Institution: his name was Frank Wilton, and his history was related to me on the night of my arrival. He and his sister Milly, of whom there is more to come, were orphans, and had been brought up by a maiden aunt, who owned houses in Hammersmith; but in an evil hour for them, the maiden aunt had married a gentleman given to speculations, and failures in business, which did not improve the family finances; and, as they were all distantly related to Doctor Dilworth, he had taken Frank for a teaching pupil, while Milly was kept at home to be useful. Frank was some five years my junior; handsome, tall, and strong for his age, with a fair face, blue eyes, and yellow hair—a regular Saxon; but one peculiarity of the Saxon race he wanted—Frank was not pushing, and that to a degree which promised to insure him the background for life. Doctor Dilworth said he wanted self-esteem and secretiveness. I know that modesty, simplicity, and courage were his chief characteristics: he would have made a loyal liege man to any leader, but going forward by himself was out of the question, and his whole existence was passed in waiting for orders.

The Dilworth Institution consisted of three divisions—the boys' school, the girls' school, and the

charity school. The two former went on from nine o'clock till three, the latter came off from five till nine; and there were early classes for young ladies and young gentlemen, which commenced at seven and terminated at half-past eight. The boys' school-room was to the right, on the ground floor; the girls' was to the left; and Doctor Dilworth's study was between them. The rest of the house was reserved for family purposes, the assistant being the only boarder received; but the Doctor had two widowed sisters with houses on the opposite side of the street, advertised to be connected with the Institution—the one took in boys, the other girls, and boarded them on phrenological principles. The sisters were both grey-haired women, closely resembling the Doctor, only they looked sourer. Into the economy of their dwellings I cannot enter, never having had a single peep; but the Dilworth mansion was the pride of houses for ventilators, cold water discipline, and early hours: the whole household was expected to be up at six, and ten was our Curfew, beyond which no accident of time or fortune was permitted to keep anybody out of bed.

I am bound to say that Master Arkwright initiated me very quickly, because he wanted somebody to do all the work, and I learned my duties like a man who knew there was nothing else for it. The first fortnight brought me fairly into the routine, and beyond that I never got, though I studied phrenology with great applica-

tion, and Doctor Dilworth gave me two hours every day to read up. I never acquired faith in the science. It may be true, and so may any ology for aught that I can certify; but believing was not my mission. Doctor Dilworth found out long after that I wanted veneration and something else, which prevented my becoming an earnest character; but in the meantime he approved of my progress, and gave me dry commendations for industry and general good conduct. The first-mentioned was a necessity in my position. I assisted the Doctor, I assisted Master Arkwright, and I assisted Mrs. Dilworth in the hours for writing and arithmetic. Here let me unburden my mind by confessing, though the acknowledgment be somewhat unchivalrous, that I would rather have officiated six hours in the boys' school than one among the phrenological young ladies: every family within seven shires, who had an ungainly or unmanageable daughter, appeared to have sent that sample of their household to the Institution, and the only tolerable-looking girls among them were those whose heads, to use the words of their instructress, required some improvement.

Frank Wilton assisted me and everybody else; indeed, half the drudgery fell to his share. If not fortunate in friendships, I have been lucky in finding companions for the place and time, and Frank was one of these. He and I occupied the same bedroom in the attic, looked over sums and

copies together, and lived in comrade fashion. I liked the boy for his frankness and honesty, for his cheerful good-nature, and possibly because he reverenced me: for being his senior and intended to have a salary, Frank took me for his leader from the first, listened to my remarks, obeyed my commands, and would have brushed my boots without murmuring. Frank believed in phrenology with all his heart, and had a perennial hope that his self-esteem and secretiveness would grow sufficiently to make Doctor Dilworth take him for a salaried assistant, when he would rent a little house and live in it with his sister Milly. I had such dreams once concerning my mother, and therefore lent an ear to Frank's tales of the said sister. She was three years older, and he had learned to look up to her in permanence as his counsellor and trust. He told me how clever, how handsome, how wise she was, and showed me her letters, of which he got one every week; but my heart remained unmoved from its allegiance, for they related to nothing but his shirts and socks, their aunt's illness, and that he was to be a good boy.

Life at Oak Park and at the Dilworth Institution was a different but not a better thing. In the one household it was dreary, in the other it was hard. I wonder of how many houses in this pious and progressive country might a similar report be made; but having seen those great dividers of the land—Evangelicalism and Secularism—in their

most perfect phases, I give my humble voice for the former: not because it bids fair to be the predominant interest, though that consideration should have weight with a sensible man; but from the memories and experience of my youth. In the Rollinsons' days, with all their overhanging gloom, with Master Richard's readings, the interludes at the full moon and the endless fuss of Chapel and Sunday School, the spiritual had room and recognition. There was a dream of something which the rule could not measure nor the shilling pay for, a speculation on subjects beyond the reach of hand or vision, and the promise of a better life sounding from those old but deathless traditions out of which the creeds of the world have been formed. These enlarging and refining influences were not in the Dilworth household. There the clay stood forth, squared, polished, and put in order, but with no light from the skies upon it: beyond the drilling, the health, and the dinners, there was nothing; and I am certain that a lengthened residence with that enlightened family would have made me a staunch supporter of the "Thirty-nine Articles," or any other form by which man declares his hope in the invisible. As it was, I had strong inclinations for stealing to Church on Sunday evenings, but the lessons of my life, and probably my form of character, had peculiarly qualified me for doing as Rome did. I stood the discipline with great equanimity, went about duties as dryly as any of

them, and took my assigned place beside Frank Wilton, at the Dilworth board, where we listened to the converse of Master Arkwright and his parents, in which we were never expected to take part, for nobody ever understood rank better, nor could keep inferiors at a more perfect distance than this radical household.

CHAPTER XVI.

Is thy love luckless? By that gate of grief
Thou goest into glorious company—
Winners and wearers of Apollo's leaf.
The famous and the wise have lost like thee;
And their laments along the ages flow,
Filling the dreams of nations with their woe.
—*The Hermit of the Woods.*

READER of mine, hast thou ever noted how many of our days have no story to tell, but that the sun rose and set and so did we? Be advised, then, that the preceding chapter contains the experience and observation of my Dilworth life for almost a year. In that time I accomplished the term of training, was found competent, and became a salaried assistant. I wrote a great many letters to Lucy, minutely describing the town, the environs, and the ladies. I got a great many replies, and had to write many more to clear myself of the charge of being satirical. Every man has his letter-writing days—it is a sort of tax now, for things as well as persons change places in our esteem; but then it was my chief joy, practised when I should have been studying Gall and Spurzheim. My Reading and Manchester friends resembled the Jews and the Samaritans: though nearly related they had

no dealings except on special occasions; but Robert Rose kept me *au courant* with the news of the north, that the new Rollinsons were getting into society, Mrs. William had the honor of their introduction; that poor Harry was not keeping as steady as could be wished; that the Baptist minister's brother had married, and he was giving up thoughts of Cambridge; that George Fenton had been taken into partnership with the old man, and they had all been down at Rosebank that summer. I had got many an invitation from the worthy Squire, but could not go: there were no vacations allowed in the Institution but a month at Christmas, when everybody was expected to go home; and Mrs. Dilworth took an early opportunity to inform me that they always shut up the house and went on a winter tour to Scotland. That saturnalia of their year came at last. The school broke up with a quarterly examination, tea, certificates, and speeches as usual. Doctor Dilworth, desired me to tell my friends he was satisfied with my conduct; and I went northward, having arranged to spend the first half of my vacation at Rosebank and the second in Manchester, where, coming from the Dilworth Institution, I would be somebody.

It was early in the afternoon of the loveliest winter day I remember: a keen hoar-frost had whitened the fields and gemmed the trees, but the sky was high and cloudless; there was not a breeze in the still air, and gleams of broken sunshine

glanced on the bare uplands and leafless woods, like smiles on aged faces. I had reached Rosebank alone, having walked from Derby, in order to surprise them. To make good that purpose, I took the meadow lane, crossed the orchard, and got into the garden. The place looked just as I had seen it last, but the evergreens I had planted at the back of Lucy's summer-house had grown thick and tall. I knew not what made me come nearer, but I did, and through the box and laurel I could see that there were two sitting on the little bench within: one of them was George Fenton and the other was Lucy Rose. She was wrapped in the shawl he had brought her; he was holding her hand between his two, and her soft eyes were looking into his flushed excited face.

"If my grandfather does not consent, George," she said, "I will never disobey him; he has been kind to me, and brought me up as his child."

"I don't want you to disobey him, Lucy," said George, and he looked in earnest. "I know my duty better than that; he can have no objection to me, but that I have not a place like Rosebank; but there's money to be made in factories—ours is flourishing—I'm a partner in it now; and, Lucy, I'll work, and save, and do anything to get a home for you like what you have been used to, if you'll only say you'll have me."

"I'll have no one else," said Lucy, in a low tender tone; and her flood of curls fell on the factory man's breast.

I walked rapidly away into the thickest part of the orchard and leant against an old apple-tree. The robin was singing in the boughs above me, the early snowdrops were coming up in the mossy ground at my feet, but the ice that no summer time would thaw was closing round my heart. It was George Fenton whom Lucy loved, and not me. In all our talks and readings and rambles, I had been but a friend, a companion, a sort of cousin; and he who had not a spark of romance or sentiment in him, who could not write a verse nor comprehend a fine thought, whose aims consisted of trade and money-making and being respectable, he was the man whom she would have and no one else. For a minute or two I thought Lucy had used me very ill; but that could not last. I believed then from my soul, as I believe now, that the girl never knew how truly I loved her. If she had, heart for heart is the law of noble natures; but my tale had never been told. There were bars of fortune between us; and, it may be, the secret was too deep and dreamy. George's affection was less ideal, and could speak out in plain and tangible terms; opportunities had favoured him; and, perhaps, he was the man to win —strange and unlikely as it seemed. I got a great insight into the heart of life while leaning against that old apple-tree. I can't say how long, but it made a man of me; and the romance of my life was over at twenty-two.

My eyes were henceforth opened to the sub-

stantial necessities, to the might of the material and the requisitions of the real. I should have told Lucy she was the light of my days, and vowed eternal constancy. George talked of getting a home for her something like what she was used to; that was the spirit of his wooing, yet it was sincere and worthy of all honor. Such considerations must enter into all engagements which take shape and sanction from the world—the fabric of society is founded on them—they build cities, they spread commerce, they make nations rich and powerful. Often had I despised him as trade-bound and narrow-minded; yet in this matter young Fenton was my superior, and deserved his advantage. I would work for my living, because I had no other chance, and would not be dependent; but the stuff that labours and reckons and realizes was not in me. I could have scribbled and talked and dreamed years away without a struggle for position or capital.

Long after, when Lavance and I became confidential, and canvassed the whole affair one night on the streets of London, he paused in his walk, and said,

"It is well, Frederic; be thankful that your days have had one vision into which the price of coals and the butcher's bill did not enter. These are the realities which make the most part of tangible ties and settlements, such shabby compounds of interest and law. The lovely lights of romance and sentiment which bring our youth so

near the poets and the fairyland may abide the contact, but not the service of the clay. Look at your cousin, the engaged young man in Manchester. He is an honest fellow after his kind, and will make a steady husband; but at twenty-five he is watching the rise of bread, and anxious about house-rates. Frederic, you have missed Lucy somehow, but not the dream of your youth; you will never frown upon her because the joint is overdone, or the linen not mended."

I should not wish to endorse all that Lavance said, but I believe that part of it; and the dream never did leave me, though Lucy and I could be no more as we had been—at least I felt so. That untold love never faded from my mind, but went up from its low flats and weedy hollows like the last light of a summer's day, to rest on the summits that came nearest to the sky. These are the thoughts and memories of after years that I am telling. What my musings were in the hour or two I stood and walked about that old mossy tree, I cannot recollect exactly; but the frosty heavens were red and the moon was rising, before I had settled my mind on a resolution which, I am thankful to say, I kept steadfastly—to act as if I had heard and seen nothing, and henceforth show George all the friendship I could, for Lucy's sake.

Nobody had known of my coming. I crossed the orchard once more as it was growing dark, and presented myself to Mr. Rose, where he sat

with Robert and Lucy and all the Fentons, in the oak-parlour. The good man's welcome was as warm and as kind as ever. Robert's heart seemed glad to see me; but he had grown very thin, looked ten years older, and had a short dry cough. Lucy came to meet me with the old joy in her eyes, and all the Fentons received me with high consideration, especially George. I never liked that young man, but some of his stiffness had certainly worn off—perhaps it thawed away in the light of Lucy's smile; or perhaps my greeting was extra-friendly, and these things tell on the coldest.

The holiday time passed as it always did at Rosebank. There were the same games, dances, and rambles; but I saw them with different eyes. Mr. Rose said I was growing a grave, sensible young man; and the Fentons considered Frederic wonderfully improved by seeing a little of the world. Lucy showed me all the old kindness, told me how well I looked, how much my letters had amused them, and that her grandfather said they were equal to anything in the *Spectator*. She danced with me in the evenings, she consulted me about her garden, she called me out with Sport and Speed, and I would have relapsed into my old belief; but when we were most familiar, the summer-house scene would come back upon my memory, and I would hear her say to George Fenton, "I'll have no one else." By the light of that discovery I also noted how her

cheek flushed when he came near; that George paid her marked attentions, and that the old man partly guessed how things were going, for he kept a quiet watch on George, and at times threw out hints about young people wanting their own way. Robert did not say it, but I knew that he had given up hopes. We talked confidently on every other subject, Robert supplementing the news of his many letters with numerous and minute details regarding the Manchester people and poor Harry, who was not at the feast, because he was unsteady that Christmas, and they could not say exactly where he had gone; and generally winding up with a declaration of his own intentions to go abroad if his cough were better. I think Lucy perceived some alteration in my manner. Once she told me that I would soon grow too wise for her, and I verily believe the girl put on grave looks and talked on sober subjects at times to suit Freddy. Lavance was a favourite one. We had been always great confidants on that. She had heard nothing of him, but a song in his handwriting had reached her through the post-office, and she sang it to me the evening before I went in her own parlour, for nobody else cared about it, and George said it was too lackadaisical for his taste, though he came and stood behind her chair. Well he might: there was a charm never to be broken in that sweet silvery voice, which always reminded me of the falling twilight, probably because Lucy sang most at that hour. The

words went to my heart, too, and I have kept a copy.

THE SLIGHTED.

The maid was singing free
Beneath the linden tree,
When the evening light was red in the west.
She was fair and young, they say,
And her love was blithe that day,
But the youth that went his way
Loved her best.

He went and won him place
In a far-off land and race,
Where his fortunes and his fame flourished fair;
But his youth for ever stayed
In the lonely linden shade,
With the evening and the maid
Singing there.

There was change of time and tide
With the bridegroom and the bride,
For the years brought clouds and cares as they passed.
But the grave-grass only grew
O'er the love that no man knew,
And the slighted heart was true
To the last.

Like the Moorish maid called Barbara, I thought that song expressed my fortunes, and took strong though indefinite resolutions of going somewhere and doing great things, after the fashion of the slighted swain, to get over the heartbreak, or something very like it, which came on me when I looked back through the mist of next morning, and saw Lucy, in her purple pelisse, looking after our party from the bay window. Had the girl been more keenly common-place, she might have seen my suit and service, and taken airs of scorn which liberate men; but from Lucy's unconscious thrall there

was no breaking, and that morning taught me the meaning of Shenstone's lines:

> "So kindly she bade me adieu,
> I thought that she bade me return."

Yet I was not unwilling to leave Rosebank then. All the Christmas time I had wanted to go, and found myself out of place, though nobody else did. Sometimes I thought that George took notes of me, and felt that I could grow to hate him, as one who had come between me and the blessing. In short, the company was not for me again, and I turned on the rising ground above the village to take a last look at the pleasant old place. Lavance used to say that there were prophetic powers latent in us all, and it may be they woke up in my mind at that moment, for as I stood the mist seemed to thicken over the Manor House, and a sudden conviction crossed me that the fair times and good fortune of Rosebank were passing away. My reflections were broken up by Robert's cough almost in my ear. He was going with us; his uncle said he never cared for staying at home now.

"It's a fine old place, I was proud of it once," said he, and without another word he turned and joined the party.

George went back to his factory in very high spirits for such a respectable young man, and I came to Manchester in the odour of the Dilworth Institution. My reception was, of course, flattering. My relatives vied with each other in paying me

polite attentions; all their acquaintances forgot that I had been Harry Fenton's boy, and talked to me about phrenology and the Reform Bill, the latter having by this time taken the place of the Catholic question. There were parties given in my honor, not only in Charlotte Square, where Mrs. William had a deal of talk about her darling sister, but also in Hanover Street, for they made parties there now, at which the young ladies sang sacred music and Mr. Temple was asked to play. I found the Rollinsons, that is to say Ned and Dick, regularly on the staff, and exceedingly on their good behaviour. The ex-Mrs. Sutherland was not yet esteemed presentable, and there were rare stories about Oak Park, of family quarrels, general extravagance, and gin. All the serious servants had gone before their advent; their own retinue was entirely changed at least once a quarter, but Davy Lawson was steward once more, and Mary Ann remained faithful to her mistress, and I presume to the pantry.

Robert said, nobody of good family should associate with such people, only it was not right to hurt their feelings; he also whispered to me that the Rollinsons were eligible young men, and old Fenton had three daughters to marry. Indeed, my visit was still new when I perceived that Ned, whose heart had long ago broken the fetters of Miss Wiggins, was paying homage at the shrine of Miss Fenton, otherwise Sarah Jane; and I secretly sympathized with Temple; for the

red-haired goddess appeared determined to retain both her votaries by an equal dispensation of smiles and frowns. Great are the charms of eligibility. Mary Ann, who had given up Robert Rose as an unprofitable speculation, was now carrying on operations against the heart of Dick; and I must say that interesting young gentleman stood on the defence of his liberty with uncommon resolution; while Eliza, the steadiest and plainest of the sisters, seemed already meditating an attack on myself. It is wonderful what may go on in well-regulated families with or without the connivance of governors; and I hold that the house-life of this most domestic land is above all others favourable to the working of under-plots. Transactions which occasionally come out in newspapers and courts of law might be quoted in proof of this opinion; but I'll turn to Sarah Jane.

There had been a small gathering over the old china. The sacred music had been sung, Mr. Temple had played the accompaniment, and his fair enslaver had practised her peculiar policy with wonted want of grace or gentleness. The ladies were shawling upstairs, the gentlemen were getting their hats in the hall, and I stepped back into the empty parlour, glad to get done with Mrs. William's lecture on her intentions of sending Willy, the prodigy, to Doctor Dilworth, only poor William had not time to consider it. There was somebody in the little adjoining room, where Robert and I used to learn Latin: the door was

ajar, the light fell full upon them. I did not shut my eyes, and I could not help seeing: there stood Mr. Temple, with his arm round Miss Fenton's waist, her hand clasped in his, and he pouring forth vows and protestations in a style I never could have attempted to my idol. If not of Paul Pry's character, which no man cares to acknowledge, I was certainly born under his star, for I have heard and seen a great deal not intended for me. On the present occasion it was a comfort to my folly that the earliest and humblest admirer had some private encouragement, and I judiciously retired into a darkened corner as Miss Fenton swept out with "Get away you silly man." Temple remained standing where she left him, but his face had suddenly changed. I am not easily frightened, but it made my blood run cold to see the scowl of scorn and hatred he cast after her; and for a moment the little high-shouldered man looked like a demon, who had got into that sober house among the tracts and factory profits.

As they say in my mother's country, I was greatly bothered that night. What mischief did Temple mean? Was it to avenge his sister's disgrace on her wealthy prosecutor he had served and bowed, made himself a convenience to his family, and paid such humble homage to his eldest daughter, whose coarse and selfish nature at once retarded and stimulated the design? I could have taken blood for wrong, for the Celtic vein was in me; but Temple's mode of retaliation was abhor-

rent to my nature. Besides, the Fentons were my relations. I had received their hospitalities. I was even then their guest; yet what was to be done. To tell any of the family what I had seen would be to come out in the character of an eavesdropper and bring a young lady into trouble. They were one and all blunt and tactless—never intended for delicate affairs—sure to get up an explosion; and there was the terrible old man. Robert Rose could do nothing in the business, and was scarcely reliable. Oh, for an hour of Lavance with his address and skill; but that was not to be had. I deliberated long when all the house were asleep; and at length—I hope my reader will call me all manner of fools and blockheads—determined on doing one of the silliest things that ever was perpetrated by a man of twenty-two, namely, to warn Sarah Jane herself.

To make my communication more impressive, I postponed it till the evening before my departure, and then took the opportunity of the lady's being at work alone in the corner of Mrs. William's back drawing-room, where she, and I also, had read Temple's letter years before. There was no time to lose, and I began,

"Miss Fenton, I wish to speak to you as a friend and cousin. I have long known that Mr. Temple professes a strong affection for you; but for your own sake, and the sake of your family, do not trust his professions, for, if there be any truth in faces, they are not sincere."

"Really, Frederic," said she, looking me full in the face, while her own grew very red, "I do not understand you; you talk very strangely this evening."

"Well," said I, getting angry and malicious, "you probably remember last Wednesday evening, Miss Fenton; and had you seen his look when you left him in the back parlour you never would——"

"Frederic," said George, opening the door, "Johnson is waiting below to see you."

And I left off admonishing and went down to see the faithful old soldier.

Time had wrought no change on him, only he called me Mr. Favoursham; said he was glad to hear of my advancement, and had always expected something of the kind; told me how deep Gittens and Slattery were getting in the law-suit, and that he hoped it would ruin them both; that Mr. Fenton had left everything in Derby at sixes and sevens, he was sorry to say; that he had been there, but could get no news of him, and feared that the poor gentleman had gone to London, where he never would do good. Johnson and I parted with mutual assurances of esteem, and next day I left my Manchester friends with a strong desire for emigration in my mind. Had California or Australia then turned up the gold, I might have tried my fortune on the Sacramento or in the Melbourne district; but as it was, I went back to the veneration and the benevolence, the hope and the adhesiveness, with all their concomitants, in the Dilworth Institution.

CHAPTER XVII.

Warring with fate thou art her instrument,
And only dost her service in that battle
Wherein great hopes and mighty hearts have fallen.
Whate'er thine aim, she can direct the arrow,
And even with thine own hand build up or ruin
Thy foeman's fortress or thy pleasant home.
—*Count Ernest's Play.*

THE winter tour to Scotland had been accomplished: everybody was in her or his place when I reached Reading. Mrs. Dilworth hoped I had left my friends all well. The Doctor said he was glad to see a young man so punctual, and Frank Wilton, who had arrived half-an-hour before, presented me, with great pomp and circumstance, a tribute from his sister Milly, in the shape of a Christmas cake compounded by her own fair hands, and weighing five pounds full weight, he assured me, for himself had put it in the scale. How would my youthful dignity have been infringed by such a presentation some years earlier! Now I wrote a complimentary note to Miss Wilton, and the cake was discussed in a council of the whole family, Mrs. Dilworth remarking, as she cut it up, that Frank's sister, whose existence she had never before acknowledged, must be a sensible girl. We were finishing its poor remains, when

the postman knocked, and the maid brought in a letter from Robert. I retired to read it at the window, as the night was coming down; and there was news for which I had not bargained.

"DEAR FREDERIC,—I write in haste to catch the post and let you know that Sarah Jane Fenton went off last night with Temple, the music-master. She took all the money in the house, besides the large silver teapot. They say they are gone to London; but, Frederic, they are not married, and the mill people now remember that, after his sister was transported, Temple was heard to say that old Fenton might not have to boast of some of his own family yet. George is gone after them. I am afraid the old man will go mad, and

"I remain, yours faithfully,

"ROBERT ROSE."

So my good intentions had gone to pave those quarters mentioned in the proverb. Sarah Jane had lost no time in telling Temple that their secret was discovered. He took advantage of the circumstance to work on her fears and folly, and the evil I endeavoured to avert was thus precipitated. It may have been owing to peculiar weakness in that department, but the transaction pressed on my conscience for many a day. If I had told George; if I had spoken to Mrs. Fenton; if I had done anything but what I did. Yet the thing was to happen, and could not be otherwise, and I had been agent without knowing it. Nobody was made acquainted with that fact,—it

remained between me and my memory. Robert Rose sent me later particulars, and they were scanty enough.

George had traced the pair to a stage-coach office in Fleet Street, but there the clue was lost, though the police were employed in a quiet way, for Miss Fenton was more than of age, and Temple could not be prosecuted. No further intelligence could be had, and George returned home to oversee the repairs and enlargement of the Fenton factory, which were then in progress; and Mrs. Dilworth, to whom her sister took the liberty of writing on this trying occasion, made numerous and grave remarks on the evident neglect of duty which Mr. Fenton had committed, in not educating his girls on phrenological principles.

"You must observe, Mr. Favoursham, that such sad doings never happen with young ladies who have been at the Institution; their minds are too well regulated; but your cousins are Baptists, or something of that sort—rich people, but not at all enlightened: oh dear! what is wealth without cultivation?"

I shook my head responsively, and made a secret vow to be avenged on Temple if ever he crossed my path. The paltry music-master had deceived me for many a year, when I saw his pursuit in the light of my own. That was all over; appearances were no more to be relied on in love than in the world; I heard so often, but I learned it then.

Time passed, and nothing was heard of the fugitives. The Fenton family got over the misfortune better than most families would have done, for they were made of tough materials. The large silver teapot was replaced. Another master was elected for the singing-class in the chapel, but the young ladies got no more private lessons; the old monarch published one decree, that the name of Sarah Jane was never to be mentioned in his presence, and another to the effect that each of his remaining daughters should have a portion of ten thousand pounds, if they behaved properly and married with his approbation. Mr. Edward Rollinson forthwith transferred his affections, which were always very movable property, to Mary Ann. Mr. Richard formally surrendered to Eliza, and commenced a course of lectures on "Reform," for the benefit of the mill people, every Saturday evening, though he was occasionally lost to public view at the "Whole Bill," as they now called his house of refuge in Shuttle Street; and the tales about Oak Park increased in depth and volume. The factory repairs were finished, and the firm was said to flourish like a green bay-tree, or, more properly, a cotton plantation. Mrs. William began to talk of a country house; George rose to a high figure among the eligibles of Manchester, and there went forth a whisper that he was engaged to somebody; but as the spring came in Robert Rose subdued his cough, and went on a continental tour with a maternal uncle who had

arrived from India, and was not of my acquaintance.

His departure cut the telegraph wire between me and the north, and I tried hard to wean my mind from that quarter. There was no longer hope nor hold in it for me. Lucy wrote sometimes, and always with the old friendship. I replied—but on my pen as well as on my heart it pressed—that she and George Fenton were a plighted pair, and Frederic was only a far-off cousin; I would think no more of Rosebank, though my dreams went there. The Dilworth Institution could occupy the thoughts of nobody but a Dilworth; so, like many a disappointed suitor known to song and story, since Apollo clasped the laurel instead of Daphne, I took mightily to the muses.

"My arms were not filled with bays," but there appeared in the *Berkshire Chronicle* an "Ode to the Thames" and sundry smaller pieces, including lines to Henry Brougham and Lord John Russell—what leaders they were among the people then—which redounded to my glorification both in Reading and in Manchester, though Master Arkwright would not notice them at all: the Doctor said he wondered any sensible young man could spend his time making verses, and Mrs. Dilworth thought I would be better employed in reading some useful book. Nevertheless, the earnest tradesmen, the self-taught mechanics, and the strong-minded ladies who attended our quarterly examinations, began

to pay me some attention. I had before remarked on the unfashionable character of the said audience and my own dissatisfaction thereat; but about this time it received an addition, long expected, and much to my liking, as well as that of my superiors. The usual assembly had met at our Midsummer examination. The classes were marshalled, and the exhibition was about to begin, when a phaeton drove up to the Institution door, and out of it stepped two ladies—one rather short, the other rather tall; both of a certain age, though the tallest looked the youngest; very well dressed, and in slight mourning. Had those ladies descended from above, like visitants known to the world's early story, their reception could not have been more reverential. Mr. Arkwright made a tremendous bustle to get them comfortable seats; the methodical Doctor postponed business for some minutes to inquire after their welfare and report progress; and I learned, from the whispered intimations of his spouse, that the new comers were the Honourable Mrs. Finchley, of Caversham Hall, and her niece, Miss Clarkson, the celebrated authoress, who took a deep interest in the Institution, and had just returned from a long tour in Italy, "among the old masters, you know." For real rank-worship, commend me to the British democracy. The ladies, with the shred of title about them, were "the observed of all observers." The whole exhibition of that day was for them. Doctor Dilworth's questions were more emphatically put, and

the answering shouts became louder for their advent. They stayed for the tea and speeches. Some young orators were rather overcome in consequence. The Doctor made a pointed allusion to the distinguished ladies, whose encouraging presence was once more among them. Mrs. Dilworth posted them up to the latest news of the neighbourhood in a continuous whisper; and I saw by the looks of the trio that they more than once criticized the new assistant.

One could not help taking notes in turn. The ladies were neither strikingly plain nor strikingly handsome. Though called aunt and niece, there was little resemblance; and the years between their ages were not many, for Miss Clarkson looked somewhere about thirty-five, and Mrs. Finchley not far on the shady side of forty. The latter was a woman of Mrs. Dilworth's mould—small, thin, and dark-complexioned. She had fine dark eyes, and hair which time had not yet touched; a brilliant color, and might have been called pretty; but her nose was a little *retroussé*; there was a coarseness in the lower features, and an ungraceful, unnecessary excitement in her manner. I have said Miss Clarkson was rather tall and thin; indeed, she escaped being a large gaunt woman by a trifle. Her hair and eyes were dark, her complexion fair and pale; her manner had a formal dignity, reminding one of the hoop and train time; and her face a thoughtful, half melancholy expression, which somehow took my fancy.

When the performance was over and the company scattering away, I was considerably astonished by Mrs. Dilworth coming up with a whisper that the ladies had been good enough to ask for an introduction. How I acquitted myself on this trying occasion, it is not for me to record; but the Honourable Mrs. Finchley assured me she was delighted to see a young man of such promising talent devoting himself to the regeneration of the world, as she might say, under the direction of Dr. Dilworth, and demanded if I did not think phrenology a charming science: while Miss Clarkson made me a dignified inclination and said, with a most flattering smile, how happy she was to make the acquaintance of a gentleman who could write that beautiful "Ode to the Thames." Lucy had written to me on the same subject, as usual prophesying that I would be a great poet. What music might have been in the prediction if I had not looked through those evergreens on Christmas-eve! But Miss Clarkson's compliment went to the vainest corner of my heart, which possibly was the largest. Was not she a celebrated authoress, the niece of the Honourable Mrs. Finchley, and the Princess Royal of all the Dilworths? Their reverence was not without reason. Besides being the most distinguished, the newly-arrived were the most efficient of all their supporters. The Institution, among its other foundation-stones, had a subscription-list, and Mrs. Finchley was not only an

annual subscriber to a tolerable tune, but also accustomed to invite the family when she was at home, and give half-yearly treats to the pupils. After the examination, let it shower or shine, a day did not elapse without her presence in the school, complimenting the Doctor, catechising the scholars, and lecturing me with fussy and vapid enthusiasm. Mrs. Dilworth did very hard toadying on these occasions, though a mere fraction of the visit was given to her department. Arkwright made uncommon efforts to shine; but I observed, and so did he with evident chagrin, that the Hon. Mrs. Finchley took particularly little notice of him: and strange to say, her attentions lessened daily, while my humble self seemed to rise as gradually in her estimation, till at length I had the full half of all her holdings forth on the charms of phrenology, the ignorance of the world, and her own boundless desire to benefit the human race. Miss Clarkson came with her aunt sometimes; but her interest in the Institution seemed rather of a speculative than a practical character. I saw that she took notes of the odd boys, was amused by the Doctor's small and dry philosophy, paid Arkwright more attention than her aunt did, conversed with me now and then, dropping remarks in that easy and friendly way which makes one slide into acquaintance, and showed a great deal of kindly patronage to Frank Wilton, whom the Hon. Mrs. Finchley noticed with only "Dear me, Doctor, have you that boy yet?"

He disclosed to me, in our own room, the antecedents of both ladies, for Frank had opportunities of knowing them. The Hon. Mrs. Finchley was a native of Hammersmith, the daughter of a barrister with half a practice and a double family, the worthy man having married twice. When very young she went out in search of a settlement with her eldest half-brother, a captain in the Bengal army, and attained her present name and rank by marrying somebody in the Civil Service, who made his fortune after twenty years' boiling in Calcutta, came home to his native Berkshire, bought a pretty estate, built Caversham Hall, and died leaving her undisputed mistress of the same, for they had no children. Miss Clarkson was the daughter of the aforesaid half-brother. He laid his wife in the churchyard of Benares, retired from the service with nothing but his half-pay, and died years before, leaving a son who had worked his way up to the ownership of a large concern in the iron trade, and a daughter who lived by her pen and was of some note as a novelist.

"The Captain and she lived ten years in one of my aunt's best houses near Kensington," said Frank. "It was sold when my step-uncle got into his first difficulties. I have heard her say they were good tenants, and very genteel, but had nothing to spare. The son has grown very rich and proud, I hear, over yonder, at Whitechapel; but Miss Clarkson would not live with

him. Though her father left her no fortune she can keep herself, you see: that's why Mrs. Finchley likes to have her, for she's mortal stingy, like all the Indian people. Oh, Mr. Favoursham, it's a fine thing to have talents: you'll be writing books some day, and getting a good living by it." And with this hope of my reaching what he considered the acme of author-craft, the honest youth turned his face to the wall and fell fast asleep.

We were all invited to Caversham Hall on the following Sunday after the botanical excursion. The village from which it was named is about half a mile from Reading, a small country hamlet on the banks of the Thames with a bridge and church of its own, and nothing but fields and farm houses to be seen from its windows. The railway has made it busier now, but then it was as rustic a spot as one could find within sixty miles of London. The Hall stood about a quarter of a mile up on the green ridgy hills which rise above the village, not a large house, but handsomely built in the best Tudor style: it had a terraced lawn in front, a garden bounded by a grove of large trees behind; within there was all of elegance and convenience that money could purchase, for the departed Indian had some taste. Nevertheless, the Hon. Mrs. Finchley's residence in one respect resembled the grotto of Antiparos, for the approach to its grandeur was neither safe nor easy. It consisted of a narrow by-way, never

gravelled, seamed with ruts, darkened by high hedges, and at the narrowest part skirted by an old mill-stream with precipitous banks and an unknown depth of mud. There was a carriage-drive, but it made a long circuit, and the charming lane I have described, being the most direct, was to have been made an avenue, when death called on the Hon. Finchley, since which time his disconsolate widow, either owing to engineering difficulties, or the stinginess Frank talked of, had allowed it to remain in its pristine state, a terror to all wayfarers, except in fine weather. I understood Mrs. Finchley's second husband, who renamed the place in his own honor, has made a very respectable carriage-way of it, and the pair drive down to the village church regularly every Sunday;—but I resume the thread of my story. There is nothing like seeing people in their own houses, for helping one to a knowledge of them. We were hospitably entertained, and sent home all in good humour. Miss Clarkson sang and played to us; she had a fine contralto voice and more artistic skill than I could appreciate. Mrs. Finchley showed us the nick-nacks she had brought from Italy, and to me, as the stranger of the evening, made a special display of her pictures, her conservatory, her library, and her own boudoir, which I did my best to admire sufficiently, and departed with an opinion of the wealthy widow which I never found reason to change.

Mrs. Finchley was a curious though not uncommon compound of the stingy and the vain. She loved money—to save it, to have it, and to spend it on herself alone; but ever at strife with this prudent propensity, there was a restless, boundless, indiscriminating vanity, at times observable in people destitute of anything like capacity. Utterly destitute of this the Hon. Mrs. Finchley was—nothing else could account for her extreme ignorance in a printing, smattering age like ours: yet the ambition of this woman's life was to be thought intellectual; not that she had any real admiration for talent, which always argues an approach to it, but because she knew it was considered fine. For that she subscribed to the Dilworth Institution—affected free-thinking philanthrophy, consorted with Miss Clarkson, and patronized me. Indeed, patronizing was Mrs. Finchley's forte. Her remarkable deficiency and constant demands on attention, made the neighbouring gentry careless of her acquaintance; a similar fate had attended her on her travels, and, like all corresponding characters, the lady naturally took to company wherein she could be queen. It was not difficult to converse with her if one could only listen and supply a catchword now and then: never troubling herself about meanings. She had immense fluency, and could go on by the hour at anything. I got into a mess at first, by endeavouring to talk about India as something within her range; but Mrs. Finchley considered India beneath her notice.

"There's no intellect in it, Mr. Favoursham. I did not know a clever person in all the Bengal Presidency. They know nothing about literature nor science, or the good of their species. It's all dress and fashion and frivolous amusements. I would not spend my time talking about such people."

"But the natives?" I ventured.

"The natives!" cried the spouse of the Calcutta official. "Dear me, Mr. Favoursham, they are all black and ignorant: none of them can speak a word of proper English; and they are always giving trouble with that nonsense about caste. India is just a place to go and make money in, and there's nothing more to be said about it."

After this intelligant estimate of the land of the sun and the worshippers of Bramah, I betook myself to the great art of listening, in which early necessities had made me something of an adept: it served my interests with other and far different talkers, and was, I honestly believe, the chief instrument in gaining Mrs. Finchley's favour. Miss Clarkson was as unlike her aunt as niece could be, and not so easily fathomed. She had seen a great deal of good society, read much, travelled some, and observed more. Though somewhat formal, her manner was at once polished and friendly. In thought, word, and action, there was nothing vulgar about her. She sang, played, and sketched well; spoke French, German, and Italian fluently; and had other accomplishments

beyond the wont of ladies, for she read the classic authors in the original, knew something of mathematics, and was a notable chess-player. Her name had a respectable place in the publishers' circular; her novels were in all the Lending Libraries. I had not read them then—modern novels had few charms for me, the old romances having stepped in before them; but from subsequent acquaintance of the lady and her works, I concluded that Miss Clarkson had more scholarship than original talent, and more judgment than imagination. Indeed, she always said that her writings were merely professional. There was a continual demand for such books by a public that would never rise above them, and the pen was her only estate. On it she contrived to live, at least without the appearance of poverty; nobody talked of her as a distressed authoress. Her wealthy relatives seldom saw her, except on invitation. Her dress, though plain, was always handsome, and she rented her own apartments in a genteel suburb of London. With her aunt Miss Clarkson lived as a visitor. There was no sympathy, no common ground between them; but as it pleased Mrs. Finchley, it probably suited her niece, and though the latter did not positively offer incense to the Indian dame, she listened to her absurdities with that courteous toleration which years and knowledge of the world alone can teach. I did not think her young, for she was thirteen years my senior; but one comes to know that five-and-

thirty is not an advanced age. Miss Clarkson was older in mind, however, than in looks or years. About the calm face and polished character there were traces of fires that had burned out early; something had wrought changes on the world within, and the lady might have been different in her youth.

END OF VOL. I.

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